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ABSTRACT

This document contains 167 Educational Resources and Information Center (ERIC) digests from eight ERIC Clearinghouses covering topics of interest to counselors who work with clients from preschool age through adults. Digests are organized alphabetically by title; three indices help users locate digests alphabetically, by educational level, and by topic. The 167 digests fall into the following categories: Accessing ERIC; Achievement; Adolescence; Adults; Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS); At-Risk Students-All Ages; Career Planning; Child Abuse; Computers and Technology; Counselor Performance and Accountability; Counselor Role; Creativity; Critical Thinking; Diversity/Higher Education; Divorce; Dropout Prevention; Early Childhood/Preschool Issues; Effective Schools; Elementary Issues; Employability; Ethical and Legal Issues; Families; Gangs; General Interest; Gifted; Grade Retention; Guidance Programs K-12; Handicapped; Homeless Children; Information Skills; Jobs/Career Development; Latchkey Children; Learning and Study Skills; Learning Styles; Marketing; Mentoring; Mexican Americans; Migrants; Minority Students; Multicultural Counseling; Parents; Peer Helping; Racism; Rural Students/Education; Selecting a College; Self-Esteem; Sex Equity; School, College and Community Alliances; Schools-College Level Guidance; Schools-Elementary Guidance; Schools-Middle School Guidance; Schools-Secondary Guidance; Southeast Asian Children; Stress; Substance Abuse; Suicide; Teenage Pregnancy; Testing and Assessment; Urban Education; Vocational Education; and Women. (NB)

CounselorQuest

Concise Analyses of Critical Counseling Topics

Over 160 Digests Indexed Alphabetically by
Title, Topic and Educational Level

Compiled by Garry R. Walz

Developed by
ERIC Counseling and Personnel Services Clearinghouse
School of Education
The University of Michigan

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Introduction

The Most Useful Resource for Counselors Ever Developed!!!

That's quite a mouthful. A lot of excellent books and materials are available to counselors. What makes *CounselorQuest* so special? Several things, beginning with its basic concept. All counselors regularly seek reliable and up-to-date information on the variety of roles and tasks they perform. Perhaps more than any other educational specialist, they are expected to be knowledgeable about the full spectrum of issues regarding the growth and development of students and related social and family issues. If that isn't enough they also must be conversant on a wide range of topics such as AIDS, substance abuse and underachievement. And these topics are often fast breaking—for example, the need for student support groups as a result of the war in the Gulf. Counselors need quick access to information. In fact, it is fair to say that counselors are involved in a never-ending quest for new information. Without comprehensive and reliable information they cannot effectively cope with the myriad demands and expectations made on them by others.

It is this never-ending quest for information that has led to the development of *CounselorQuest*—ERIC/CAPS' response to the counselor's need for readily retrievable information on topics of major importance.

Highly Useful Features of *CounselorQuest*

CounselorQuest was designed with the practicing counselor in mind. It has a number of useful features which assist counselors and other human services specialists in locating relevant information. Among the special features are:

- Over 160 digests on a wide range of counseling relevant topics.
- Authoritative information provided by information specialists from the following eight ERIC Clearinghouses:
  - *Adult, Career, and Vocational Education*
  - *Counseling and Personnel Services*
  - *Educational Management*
  - *Elementary and Early Childhood Education*
  - *Handicapped and Gifted Children*
  - *Higher Education*

Information Resources

Tests, Measurement, and Evaluation

- Coverage of the entire educational range including:
  - Pre-school
  - Elementary School
  - Middle School
  - Secondary School
  - Pre-K to 12
  - Post-Secondary and Adult
  - College and University
  - General

  Though an individual may be interested in only a specific educational level, frequently materials produced with another level in mind can provide useful ideas and resources.
- Use of **three** separate indexes which facilitate the user's identification and easy retrieval of digests relevant to their interests/needs. The digests are retrievable: (1) by title alphabetically; (2) by educational level, e.g., elementary, secondary, etc.; and (3) by topic, e.g., career planning, students at risk, etc.
- Use of a standard digest format that aids users in obtaining the information that they need quickly. Each digest is organized around four major sections: (1) overview of the topic; (2) background information and research data; (3) suggested program and practice interventions; and (4) readily available recommended resources (frequently in ERIC!)
- Succinct and highly readable writing style. **The average digest can be read in only five minutes,** yet it provides the reader with a better understanding of the topic, specific recommendations for intervention and recommended resources that offer further discussion of the topic and additional practice and program ideas.
- Over 40 topical areas covering emerging and extant priorities on counseling and student services. Traditional high counselor interest areas such as career planning, ethical and legal issues, and counselor role are supplemented with topical coverage of contemporary issues such as gangs, peer helping, diversity and homeless children.

How *CounselorQuest* Can Facilitate Your Professional Development and Enhance Your Counseling Knowledge and Skills

There are at least three ways that *CounselorQuest* can benefit counselors. The first approach is to utilize *CounselorQuest* as a professional development tool with the goal of upgrading your knowledge on a variety of topics related to your counseling role and functions. A secondary school counselor, for instance, could read all of the digests relating to the secondary level with the intention of broadening their knowledge about counseling and education at the secondary level. Much of what they read would not be counseling specific but would rather add to their understanding of the secondary school milieu, including parents, teachers, adolescents and families. By obtaining a more comprehensive picture of secondary schooling and counseling, they would be able to perform more effectively as a counselor and as a consultant to parents and teachers.

The second approach would be to target specific topics, e.g., career development, that the counselor wishes to enhance his or her knowledge and skills in. By reading all of the digests in a specific topical area, counselors can quickly update their knowledge about the topic as well as identify resources for additional learning. Used in this fashion, the digests can provide an *"instant expertise"* for the counselor who has only limited knowledge of a topic.

A third approach is to use the digest directly with clients (students, parents) or to use them to provide information to large groups such as school boards and PTA's. All of the enclosed digests are approved for local reproduction and dissemination. Because of their brevity and focus on topics of high interest, they are usually well received by others and invariably read and used immediately rather than relegated to the "...as soon as I find the time, I'll read it" stack of unread materials.

CounselorQuest as a Jump-start to Becoming More Knowledgeable

More than anything else, *CounselorQuest* is a quick and effective way to upgrade your counseling knowledge. Sometimes the information it provides is all that is needed. But *CounselorQuest* also may motivate a person to conduct an ERIC search to delve more deeply into a subject. *ERIC on CD-ROM—Update,* digest no. 58, provides information on a "user friendly" approach to searching ERIC. The names of the eight clearinghouses contributing digests to *CounselorQuest* are also included and may be contacted if additional information on a digest topic is desired. A particularly useful source of information about the ERIC system is the U.S. Department of Education pamphlet, *All About*

ERIC which can be obtained by writing to ERIC/CAPS or by calling ACCESS ERIC toll free at 1-800-USE-ERIC.

CounselorQuest will continue to be produced and upgraded on a yearly basis. Comments on it, including suggested topics for inclusion in *CounselorQuest* are most welcome.

Garry R. Walz
Director, ERIC/CAPS

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Concise Analyses of Critical Counseling Topics

Compiled by
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CG023327

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ERIC
Digest

Ability Grouping in Elementary Schools

John Hollifield

What Is Ability Grouping?

Ability grouping of students is one of the oldest and most controversial issues in elementary and secondary schools. Hundreds of research studies have examined the effects of the two most common variants: between-class and within-class ability grouping. Between-class grouping refers to a school's practice of forming classrooms that contain students of similar ability. Within-class grouping refers to a teacher's practice of forming groups of students of similar ability within an individual class.

This digest summarizes the conclusions of Robert E. Slavin's 1986 comprehensive review of research on the different types of ability grouping in elementary schools. The purpose of his review was to identify grouping practices that promote student achievement.

Why Use Ability Grouping?

In theory, ability grouping increases student achievement by reducing the disparity in student ability levels, and this increases the likelihood that teachers can provide instruction that is neither too easy nor too hard for most students. The assumption is that ability grouping allows the teacher (1) to increase the pace and raise the level of instruction for high achievers, and (2) to provide more individual attention, repetition, and review for low achievers. The high achievers benefit from having to compete with one another, and the low achievers benefit from not having to compete with their more able peers.

One of the main arguments against ability grouping is that the practice creates classes or groups of low achievers who are deprived of the example and stimulation provided by high achievers. Labeling students according to ability and assigning them to low-achievement groups may also communicate self-fulfilling low expectations. Further, groups with low performance often receive a lower quality of instruction than other groups. Slavin sees as the most compelling argument against ability grouping its creation of academic elites, a practice which goes against democratic ideals.

How Does Grouping Affect Student Achievement?

In his review, Slavin examines evidence on the achievement effects of five comprehensive ability grouping plans in elementary schools. His review draws conclusions about the effectiveness of the following grouping plans: ability grouped class assignment, regrouping for reading or mathematics, the Joplin Plan, nongraded plans, and within-class ability grouping.

Ability Grouped Class Assignment. This grouping plan places students in one self-contained class on the basis of ability or achievement. In some departmentalized upper elementary grades, the class may move as a whole from teacher to teacher. Evidence suggests that ability grouped class assignment does not enhance student achievement in the elementary school.

Regrouping for Reading and Mathematics. Under this plan, students are assigned to heterogeneous homeroom classes for most of the day, but are regrouped according to achievement level for one or more subjects. For example, all students from various homeroom classes of one grade level might be re-sorted into ability grouped classes for a period of reading instruction. Results indicate that regrouping for reading or mathematics can improve student achievement. However, the level and pace of instruction must be adapted to achievement level. Furthermore, students must not be regrouped for more than one or two subjects.

The Joplin Plan. This grouping plan assigns students to heterogeneous classes for most of the day but regroups them across grade levels for reading instruction. For example, a reading class at the fifth grade, first semester level might include high achieving fourth graders, average achieving fifth graders, and low achieving sixth graders. There is strong evidence that the Joplin Plan increases reading achievement.

Nongraded Plan. This plan includes a variety of related grouping plans that place students in flexible groups according to performance rather than age. Thus, grade-level designations are eliminated. The curriculum for each subject is divided into levels through which students progress at their own rates. Well-controlled studies conducted in regular schools generally support the use of comprehensive nongraded plans.

Within-class Ability Grouping. This plan is generally used for reading or mathematics. Teachers assign students within their classroom to one of a small number of groups based on ability level. These groups work on different materials at rates unique to their needs and abilities. Too few studies have been conducted on the use of within-class ability grouping in reading to support or challenge its effectiveness. Part of the problem is that within-class grouping is so widespread in reading instruction that it is difficult to conduct research that includes a control group not using the practice. Research on within-class ability grouping in mathematics clearly supports the practice, especially when only two or three groups are formed. The positive effects are slightly greater for low-achieving students than for average or high achievers.

What Should Schools and Teachers Do About Ability Grouping?

Slavin concludes that schools and teachers should use the methods proved most effective, such as within-class ability grouping in mathematics, nongraded plans in reading, and the Joplin Plan. The review recommends that schools find alternatives to the use of ability grouped class assignment, such as assigning students to self-contained classes according to general ability or performance level.

Based on his examination of the features of successful and unsuccessful practices, Slavin recommends that the following elements be included in successful ability grouping plans:

- Students should identify primarily with a heterogeneous class. They should be regrouped by ability only when reducing heterogeneity is particularly important for learning, as is the case with math or reading instruction.
- Grouping plans should reduce student heterogeneity in the specific skill being taught, not in IQ or overall achievement level.
- Grouping plans should allow for frequent reassessment of student placement and for easy reassignment based on student progress.
- Teachers must vary the level and pace of instruction according to student levels of readiness and learning rates in regrouped classes.
- Only a small number of groups should be formed in within-class ability grouping. This will allow the teacher to provide adequate direct instruction for each group.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Slavin, Robert E. *Ability Grouping and Student Achievement in Elementary Schools: A Best-Evidence Synthesis*. Baltimore, MD: Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools, 1986.

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DIGEST

ACCESSING ERIC WITH YOUR MICROCOMPUTER

This digest focuses on how to use your microcomputer as a terminal. It covers:

- Hardware and software requirements;
- Configuring the software; and
- Basic requirements for specific microcomputers.

What is needed to make a microcomputer act as a terminal?

Any ASCII coded (American Standard Code for Information Interchange) microcomputer can be used as a terminal when the following requirements are met:

- Software — communications or terminal emulator software
- Hardware —
  - a) communications interface
  - b) modem — to connect with telephone lines
- Telephone lines

Software—Communications or Terminal Emulator Software

A computer needs certain instructions to make it act as a terminal to communicate with another computer. It is possible to make your micro act as a dumb terminal using only a modem and the communications interface in most situations, but for database searching other features are desirable. The need for these special features depends on individual requirements. For example, unless you have some way of storing a search to disk or to a printer, you won't be able to reference the search later. Software differs for every computer and operating system. It is important that you experiment with the software on a system like your own or have some kind of return policy before purchasing.

Some special features in communications software that should be considered are listed below. These features are desirable for using your microcomputer as a terminal to do *database searching*. If you have other uses for a terminal (e.g., accessing a large mainframe computer), other features will be needed as well.

Print: This feature allows the screen display to be printed. Some software will allow you to print simultaneously, while in other cases it is necessary to save to disk and load the disk's contents to the printer later.

Save: This feature lets you save the screen display on a disk.

Access to Command Mode: It is desirable to be able to turn the printer on and off, change duplex settings, and access other system commands without breaking the connection with the vendor.

Format Display: Material being displayed on the screen will be formatted so that complete words will appear instead of having half the word at the end of one line and the rest of the word at the beginning of the next line.

Default Setting: To access different vendors, it is necessary to configure the software for that vendor. It is very useful to be able to pre-designate the configuration and then refer to that default setting (see Configuring the Software).

Status Indicator: Each software package provides certain options, e.g., printer on or off, write to disk, etc. It is helpful to be able to go to a menu that indicates what the status of these options is at any stage.

New communications software can be purchased with Hayes modems, while Racal Vadic provides the software with their modem. There are also two public domain communications programs for the IBM PC and compatibles called Q-Modem and PC Talk. They are available through microcomputer clubs or bulletin boards.

Configuring the Software

In order for a microcomputer to interface (access) the major vendors (BRS, DIALOG, or SDC), certain technical requirements, sometimes called telecommunications protocols, need to be set. This is called configuring the microcomputer and is part of the software. Baud rate, parity, duplex, and data length are examples of the settings that need to be made. The configuration settings vary for each vendor. Documentation from the vendors should include necessary information, or they can be contacted directly.

DIALOG: 1-800-3-DIALOG

BRS: 1-800-345-4277

SDC: 1-800-421-7229; 1-800-352-6689 (CA)

Depending on the kind of microcomputer you use as a terminal, which vendor you access, and which telephone network (Tymnet, Telenet, or Uninet) you use, certain commands need to be added to the protocol. For example, if you are using a printer during your search, certain commands are necessary to slow down transmission so that no data is lost. The vendors can give you this information.

Hardware

In order for data to be sent over a distance it is first necessary to convert from parallel transmission (i.e., sending 8 bits of data simultaneously) to serial transmission, which sends each bit one after the other or consecutively. This is accomplished by an EIA (Electronic Industries Association) RS-232C interface, the communications interface. Each computer manufacturer has a different way of referring to this interface (see the list below). It can be called a communications card, interface module, RS-232C interface or port, serial interface, or any combination of these. The RS-232C interface can also be combined with the other essential element in using your computer as a terminal, the modem.

Modem is an acronym for MOdulator/DEModulator. Because it is very expensive and inefficient to run direct lines from terminals to the large vendors, telephone lines are used to transmit the signals. To do this, serial transmissions need to be converted (or modulated) from digital to audio signals. At the other end, the audio signals have to be demodulated back into digital serial mode.

The speed at which data is being sent and received has to be the same. For this reason, some modems allow you to select the speed (either 300, 1200, or higher) that is being used (see Configuring the Software).

Lines from the RS-232C interface are connected to the modem, which is then hooked into the telephone line. This is done with either a modular jack or an acoustic coupler. A modular jack is the plug used to connect a regular telephone. If the plugs are compatible, the regular phone can be unplugged and the modem connected. An acoustic coupler is a modem that uses the handset on a telephone to connect with the phone lines. The modem has two cups that hold the receiver (handset) to allow transmission of audio signals. Usually a cable with adaptors is needed to make the connection between the RS-232C interface and the modem.

The communications interface and modem can also be combined onto a single board that fits into a slot inside the micro and connects directly with the telephone. This is called an internal modem.

The following is a list of some of the popular microcomputers and required components to access the vendors.

Microcomputer and Necessary Hardware/Software

APPLE II, II PLUS, IIe
- Telephone modem (Hayes Micromodem II suggested)
- Communications card (Serial or Superserial)
- Software available with Hayes modems

MACINTOSH/APPLE IIc
- Apple Personal Modem
- Built-in RS-232 port
- For MacIntosh—MacTerminal software
- For IIc—Apple Access

COMPAQ
- RS-232 interface
- Hayes modem
- Use public domain software or software available with modem

IBM PERSONAL COMPUTER
- Modem (Hayes Smartmodem suggested)
- RS-232 interface
- Use public domain software or software available with modem

LEADING EDGE
- Built-in RS-232 interface
- Hayes modem
- Use public domain software or software available with modem

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS 99/4, 99/4A
- Modem
- RS-232 interface
- Terminal EMULATOR II software cartridge

TRS-80 Model I
- Modem
- RS-232 interface board and expansion interface
- RS Term software or RS model 25-1172 modem and software

TRS-80 Model II
- Modem and RS-232 cable
- Software optional

TRS-80 Model III
- Modem
- RS-232 interface board
- RS Term software

Most CP/M-based microcomputers
- Modem
- RS-232 port

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HIGHLIGHTS
...An ERIC/CAPS Fact Sheet

Accountability in Counseling

Issues in Counselor Accountability

Credentialing. Credentialing is the process by which professionals demonstrate that they *can* do what they say they can do. As a system, credentialing consists of four interdependent and interrelated components: standards, accreditation, professional certification, and licensure.

- Standards. Professional standards define the requisite knowledge and skills to be addressed by counselor preparation programs and the expected ethical behavior of counselors. Standards are the core of the credentialing system.
- Accreditation. Accreditation assures that counselors receive training that meets the standards set by the profession. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) is an independent, legally incorporated body that applies the standards developed and adopted by the American Association for Counseling and Development (formerly the American Personnel and Guidance Association) and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision. CACREP accredits entry-level graduate programs in school counseling, student personnel services in higher education, counseling in community and other agency settings, and doctoral programs in counselor education and supervision.
- Certification. Certification is the means by which the profession applies its standards to individual counselors. Those who meet certification standards may be listed in a register which enables consumers, potential employers, insurance carriers, government agencies, and allied service providers to identify professionals of demonstrated skill. Professional certification is intended to address the credentialing needs of counselors who practice outside school settings.
- Licensure. Licensure is the means by which state governments legally define and regulate the practice of a profession. At the present, very few states have counselor licensure laws, but many state divisions of the American Association for Counseling and Development are pushing their states to adopt such legislation. Professional counselors advocating licensure argue that, without it, anyone can claim to be a counselor and consumers have no legal protection against people who provide services that do not meet the profession's standards.

Professional Disclosure. A professional disclosure statement is a document in which counselors or counseling agencies inform potential clients of their theoretical/philosophical orientation, the nature of the services to be provided, and their qualifications to provide such services. Some counselors see professional disclosure as an alternative to credentialing; others see it more as an instrument of information and accountability.

Documentation of Activities. In addition to demonstrating that they *can* provide services that meet both professional standards and program needs, counselors must be able to provide evidence that they *do* provide such services. Here, an accurate and comprehensive record keeping system is critical. In settings where counselors' primary function is to see individual clients all day, client records may adequately serve this purpose. However, where counselors' functions are quite varied, a fair amount of creativity may be required to design a system that adequately reflects how the counselor spends his/her time without adding yet another form of time-consuming paperwork. In the past, this dimension of accountability has received relatively little attention because there has been a general belief that: 1) counseling as a process is difficult to document; 2) documentation procedures may interfere with the counseling process; and 3) documentation may violate clients' rights to privacy or confidentiality. While all three of these reasons may be valid, their existence is due primarily to the limitations of instrumentation and technology, not to the appropriateness or need for documentation. Demands for accountability are currently making it *necessary* to develop new and innovative documentation procedures that address the issues just cited. And, fortunately, the growing body of knowledge about the counseling process and improvements in technology are making such developments *possible*.

Linkage with Outcomes. Recently, the key word in accountability has been *results*. Consumers, administrators, and employers are not satisfied with only the documentation of counselor credentials and activities. They want evidence that these credentials and activities make a difference for the clients or students with whom the counselor is working. This can be particularly threatening to counselors because desired counseling outcomes are often difficult to specify; usually occur outside the counseling office; may vary from client to client; may occur without the client's awareness (e.g., subtle attitude or behavior modifications); and may involve a series of stages in which progress *toward* the long-range goal is difficult to demonstrate. To address these problems, a comprehensive and systematic program evaluation plan must be developed by persons who are knowledgeable in both program evaluation and counseling theory.

Issues in Program Accountability

Demands for program evaluation may arise either internally or externally and may be initiated either to *prove* a program's effectiveness or to *improve* its effectiveness. Demands for accountability almost always arise externally with the primary purpose of proving the program's effectiveness.

Stakeholders. Usually, the demand for program accountability is initiated by one or more of the various groups of people who have a "stake" in the program. Although the groups of stakeholders include counselors and other program

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staff, the stakeholders who most often insist on accountability are the consumers of the product (clients), the funders of the program (sponsors, taxpayers), and/or those who are accountable to a higher level of authority (program administrators). For most programs, an accountability model must incorporate ways to gather information that will meet each group's needs, but what most stakeholders are interested in is demonstration of results.

Availability of Resources. The first step in being accountable is to demonstrate that the *capacity* to deliver quality counseling services exists. For counseling programs, this means such things as: employing qualified counselors; keeping the client/counselor ratio at a reasonable level; providing on-going inservice and staff development activities; maintaining adequate physical facilities; providing adequate support services to counselors; and providing counselors and clients with the materials and equipment necessary to conduct planned activities.

Documentation of Activities. Program accountability must include documentation that the program actually does deliver the services that it says it can deliver. At the program level, this means that documentation will go beyond individual counselor activity logs and client records to include summary statistics such as: total number of clients served; numbers of clients served in various subgroups; total number of counseling hours provided; and total amount of equipment and supply use.

Linkage with Outcomes. The methodological problems of linking program outcomes to activities are similar to those for counselor accountability. However, the personal threat to the individual counselor may be somewhat reduced by the aggregation of data across counselors. Also, it may be possible to demonstrate greater overall client progress toward goal achievement in program studies than in individual counselor studies simply because of the increase in number of cases and the amount of data available for analysis. This would be particularly true in situations where client progress is likely to be very slow and clients are at various stages of goal achievement.

Cost Analyses. For most stakeholders, the bottom line in accountability is cost. Are clients getting their money's worth? Are institutional expenditures for the counseling department justified? Are guidance directors administering programs so as to get the most out of each budget dollar? A common source of confusion in cost analysis is cost-benefit vs. cost-effectiveness. In *cost-benefit analyses*, the "worth" of outcomes is estimated in terms of a single quantity, usually money. In *cost-effectiveness analyses*, the "worth" of the benefits of the outcomes has already been determined or at least accepted by stakeholders, and the primary focus is on costs of achieving the outcomes. Variations of cost-effectiveness include measuring the costs of outcome achievement at various levels (e.g., 50%, 75%) and comparison of the costs of alternative methods for achieving outcomes (e.g., individual counseling vs. group counseling).

Designing an Accountability System for a Counseling Program

1. **Identify stakeholders.** The first step in designing an accountability system is to identify your audience. Who will use the data?
2. **Clarify purposes.** Once all stakeholders have been identified, meet with representatives of each stakeholder group to determine how data will be used and what types of data are needed. Obtaining stakeholder input at this stage will be extremely effective in helping you be adequately prepared to meet future accountability demands. It will also set the stage for collaborative teamwork and help reduce some of the we-they dichotomies that often cause communication problems.
3. **Specify program objectives.** To avoid potential problems due to differences of opinion regarding the "worth" of program outcomes, obtain stakeholder consensus on the relative importance of specific program objectives. Depending on the number of stakeholders involved and the diversity of their interests, this may consist of simply an open group discussion or it may require a formal needs assessment. In either case, having stakeholder priorities established will help you focus both your program activities and your data collection efforts.
4. **Identify activities needed to achieve objectives.** You, as a counseling professional, have the expertise to identify the counseling strategies that will be most effective in achieving program objectives, but you must help stakeholders understand these linkages if you want them to place any value on the documentation of your activities. One effective way to communicate this is to display each objective and its related activities diagrammatically. This can be particularly useful in clarifying the importance of collecting data on intermediate outcomes when ultimate outcomes may not be achieved within the period of the accountability study.
5. **Identify resources needed to achieve objectives.** Stakeholders, particularly those who have control over program resources, must understand what the program needs in the way of personnel, facilities, equipment, supplies, and even such items as positive public relations, if it is to effectively conduct the activities identified in the previous step. Here, again, an effective way to communicate these needs is to link each resource diagrammatically to the activity(ies) it supports.
6. **Specify the sets of evidence** that will demonstrate that a) resources are available and used, b) activities are conducted as planned, and c) objectives are being achieved. A good approach to generating useful and innovative types of data to collect is to ask stakeholders to respond to the question, "What would convince you that . . ." for each of the three areas listed. This not only helps you develop a complete data collection strategy, but also guarantees that the data you collect will be acceptable evidence to your stakeholders.
7. **Analyze costs.** You should be concerned primarily with reporting actual cost analyses, such as cost/client, cost/work hour, and cost/program component. It may be very important, however, to clarify with stakeholders what should be included in cost considerations so that you don't overlook something which they consider important.
8. **Prepare reports.** Find out when stakeholders will be expecting reports and clarify ahead of time how extensive a report they want. In general, the text of the report should be as brief as possible, with graphic displays (charts, tables, etc.) wherever appropriate. A preface that contains an "executive summary" highlighting the major points is almost always appreciated.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenthood

Recent Trends

Adolescent pregnancy and parenthood remain significant issues among policy makers, service providers and members of the American public alike. Although the birthrate among adolescents has declined since peaking in the late 1950s, there have been changes in adolescents' sexual behavior, incidence of pregnancy, choices of pregnancy resolution and rates of marriage which have altered the nature of the phenomenon and contributed to the rising concern since the late 1960s. These challenging issues have spawned a great deal of research examining the causes and consequences of these changes and a great variety of practice and policy approaches to ameliorate and prevent adolescent pregnancy and parenthood.

Birthrate

Between 1977 and 1987 the actual birth rate among young women ages 15–19 declined slightly, from 52.8 per 1000 women to 51.1. During the same time period, the birthrate changed little among younger teens, under age 15, hovering around 1.2 births per 1000 girls. Because the number of teens in the population fell during the past decade, the total number of births to teens also declined, falling from 570,000 in 1977 to 472,623 in 1987.

However, this decline in the birthrate and total numbers of births to teens occurred in the face of greater prevalence of sexual activity, higher rates of pregnancy, abortion and, perhaps most significant, dramatically higher proportions of births occurring outside of marriage. Although the gap between teens of different races is steadily closing, non-white teens are twice as likely as white teens to become pregnant, with no difference by race in the likelihood of having an abortion. Nevertheless, because of their higher pregnancy rate, non-whites have higher rates of both abortion and birth (Moore, 1989).

One of the more significant trends is that, while overall birthrates have remained fairly steady, rates of marriage among teens have plunged. Black teen mothers are much more likely than their white counterparts to be unmarried, but the rate of out-of-wedlock childbearing among white teens has steadily increased. In sum, we have seen in recent decades a dramatic change in adolescents' sexual, pregnancy and marital choices, all of which bring about an increased proportion of young women having early sexual intercourse, becoming pregnant, and resolving the pregnancy either through abortion or single motherhood.

Early Sexual Activity

More teens today report having sexual intercourse, having it at earlier ages, and using birth control. However, the increase in those teens having early intercourse outpaced use of contraception, thus putting more adolescents at risk of an unwanted pregnancy.

In general, sex among adolescents has become more normative across contemporary American society. There is no evidence of any particular consequences to teens being sexually active except, of course, the risks of pregnancy and contracting sexually transmitted diseases. Although programs designed to reduce or to delay sexual activity remain a controversial subject of debate, programs and policies whose goals include adolescent pregnancy prevention have not been shown either to reduce nor to encourage sexual activity (Newcomer, 1985).

Pregnancy Prevention

With respect to pregnancy prevention among those who have sexual experience, the trends are mixed. Contraceptive use rose during the 1970s, preventing even greater increase in teen pregnancies, given how much sexual activity increased. While there is no reported difference by race in the likelihood that a young woman used birth control at last intercourse, black women tend to use more effective contraceptives like the birth control pill; however, black teens are also more likely to use the pill erratically, thus eliminating the contraceptive advantage. The average time between initiation of sexual activity and first using birth control is about one year. This lapse has been a consistent finding since the early 1970s.

Several factors have been found to be positively associated with teens using birth control. They include: older age of initiation of sexual activity; stability of the relationship with partner; knowledge of sexuality, reproduction and contraception; higher academic aspirations; attitude toward personal risks; greater acceptance of one's own sexuality; and the presence of parental supervision and support.

Underlying many of these factors is the degree of an adolescent's cognitive development. In general, a 17-year-old is better able to comprehend the consequences of an action and anticipate the future than is a 12-year-old. Many teens believe that they are personally invulnerable to harm. This common developmental characteristic (as well as other aspects of working with adolescents) should be considered when designing pregnancy prevention programs in both educational and health care settings.

Several conceptual and programmatic approaches to pregnancy prevention exist. The most common include general encouragement for use of birth control; school-based clinics; condom distribution; sexuality and contraception education in and out of school; enhancing life options; and encouraging teens to delay sexual initiation. Although different approaches to pregnancy prevention generate tremendous public and political debate and disagreement, there is not adequate research evidence suggesting which is the most effective. The National Council's *Risking the Future* found that encouraging contraceptive use for sexually active teenagers has the most empirical support (Hayes, 1987). Evidence exists that programs which are comprehensive in scope tend to be the most successful. In Baltimore, a joint school and clinic-based program offered the promise of encouraging students to be responsible in their sexual behavior (Zabin, Hirsch, Streett, Emerson, Smith, Hardy, & King, 1988). Some evidence does suggest that exposure to innovative programs geared toward pregnancy prevention, such as peer counseling/advocacy and peer theater troupes, promotes the utilization of health services. It is clear that no one single element can eliminate unwanted pregnancies among teens.

Pregnancy Resolution

In recent years more pregnant teens have chosen to resolve a pregnancy through abortion, while adoption has declined precipitously. By far, however, the most significant change in pregnancy resolution is the rise in births to unmarried teens.

An early pregnancy which is unwanted, as most are to teens, generally is a crisis not only for the young woman but also for her family and the baby's father, and should be treated by professionals as such (Maracek, 1987). Brazell and Acock (1988) found that a pregnant adolescent's choices about pregnancy resolution are influenced in part by her own attitudes toward abortion, her perceptions of the attitudes of parents and friends, parents' and her own aspirations, and by how close she is to her boyfriend. This suggests that the process of resolving an unplanned pregnancy should include significant individuals in the teen's life whenever possible. A comprehensive approach should allow the individuals to review all of the options available, including whether to proceed with the birth, whether to keep the baby, whether to marry, and if the girl remains single, how to obtain financial and social support for parenthood.

All of the choices for resolving an early pregnancy are difficult. In 1988 the United States Surgeon General asserted that there were no empirical grounds for either supporting or condemning abortion based on adverse or positive results. While state and federal policies to encourage adoption have been implemented since the early 1980s, there is no evidence that the number of young women who choose this option has increased (Henshaw, Kenney, Somberg, & Van Vort, 1989).

Teenage Parents

Once teenagers become parents, they face a new set of challenges. Teen mothers and their children are at higher risk for many difficulties than their non-parent peers. For example, Furstenberg, Brooks-Gunn, and Morgan (1987) found that teenage mothers have more than their share of out-of-wedlock births and marital upheavals, and their children are at increased risk for school and social failure. Teen mothers disproportionately experience welfare-dependency and the attending problems of poverty.

However, the fate of a young man or woman is by no means sealed upon becoming a parent. Mediating factors such as completing education and receiving support services can significantly improve life chances for parents and children. Teen parents vary considerably in the amount of support they need in order to avoid the worst consequences of teen parenthood. For those who need assistance, programs for teen parents are showing some success based on longitudinal as well as more limited program evaluations. In general, programs which offer comprehensive services (e.g., daycare, educational support, and/or vocational placement) are most effective.

Despite a great deal of public attention being given to programs for teen parents and mounting evidence of their effectiveness, the number of new young parents who participate in these programs is very small. Access is limited by the fact that these programs are inadequately funded to serve all who need their services; also programs are often not well-known in communities.

Male Involvement

In recent years, attention has shifted to include young men in efforts to prevent pregnancy, help young parents, and promote more responsible teen behavior. Many programs to serve young fathers or boys at risk of parenthood have been thwarted by the difficulty of attracting clients to female-oriented programs. In addition, studies attempting to identify specific characteristics of these young men have been limited by sample selection problems, in that many fewer boys report having been involved in pregnancy and birth than do girls.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Adult Career Counseling -- New Clienteles

Introduction

Adult career counselors have traditionally dealt with the concerns of re-entry women or employed men and women who are questioning the direction of their current occupation and looking for possible career alternatives. However, other groups of people now appear frequently in the adult career counselor's office: *older adults* who are looking for post-retirement careers; *displaced workers*, both white and blue collar, whose jobs have been eliminated through such events as plant closings, farm foreclosures, and business mergers or failures; and *dual-career couples* whose needs are more complex than those of an individual doing career exploration.

Another trend is the movement of career planning into the corporate setting as businesses and other organizations begin to offer counseling and career planning at the work site. Since keeping abreast of changes in occupational trends and labor market projections is an important component of a career counseling program (Zunker, 1981) another important development is the use of computers, which provide both interactive guidance programs and up-to-date occupational information.

All of these trends necessitate expansion of the adult career counselor's skills, knowledge base, and roles.

Older Adults

Adults who require retirement counseling are often seeking full- or part-time careers. Those who wish to find part-time work are usually trying to make ends meet or hoping to fulfill personal needs such as the desire to contribute to society or the need for affiliation (Kurs, 1980). Goals of retirement education may include:

1. a positive attitude toward retirement and potential for continued success and growth,
2. a personal plan for retirement,
3. planning, decision-making, and interpersonal communication skills,
4. a deeper awareness of having control over one's own future (Stone & Penman, 1988).

Retirement planning has traditionally focused on financial planning. Many newer programs also include the interpersonal or lifestyle aspects of adjusting to retirement. Retirement specialists must add to their counseling repertoire an understanding of career development for the increasing numbers of older clients who wish another career; and they must add an understanding of the aging process as well as of key retirement issues.

Displaced Workers

Large numbers of displaced workers are facing decisions about new careers and confronting a job search for the first time in their lives. Many of these people moved into their previous work without much conscious thought, and find themselves ill equipped to plan and develop new work lives (Ashley, 1986). In addition, family resistance to change may further disrupt a workers' abilities to take action on his/her own behalf (Lutz & Weeks, 1985). Counselors need to target their strategies to the different psychological stages experienced by most displaced workers. According to Greenwood (1987), "Stage three, when the dislocated worker is actively seeking a job, is the true 'in-transition' time and emotional support is critical. If jobs are not found quickly, apathy, frustration, disillusionment and deep depression are likely to set in."

Amundson & Borgen (1982) focus on the intervention strategies appropriate for the three stages of the unemployment cycle. Loss and search interventions can include: (a) understanding clients' feelings and challenging them to view their job loss from different perspectives, (b) assisting in the resolution of conflicts related to the loss, (c) developing a realistic view of skills and strengths, (d) evaluating with clients their options and job search approaches, (e) continuing to support clients, (f) developing specific action plans, and (g) practicing necessary skills for implementing the plans. Burnout strategies should include validating client feelings, building self concept, and identifying new approaches to the job search.

Dual Career Couples

Increasingly career counselors are being sought by dual-career couples who have complex career planning issues because of their interdependence. In the past career planning has been viewed as an individual activity, but for both men and women in dual-career relationships career decisions cannot be made without taking into consideration the connection between work and family roles. Consequently, both spouses must be involved in the career counseling process to deal with the issues of balancing roles and demands, juggling responsibilities, and the careful planning of career transitions (Hazard & Kozlow, 1985; Miller, 1985).

The adult career counselor must be aware of the career, gender role, and marriage-family dilemmas of couples in career transitions who are experiencing the stress and conflict which accompany disequilibrium (O'Neil, 1986). The career counselor who works with dual-career couples

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must understand the developmental stage of: (a) each career in the family, (b) the "couple" relationship, and (c) the family (Miller, 1985).

Career Planning at the Work Site

In the past, career counseling programs for adults have been delivered in academic institutions, community agencies, and private offices. The workplace is now emerging as an additional setting for these services. Profit and non-profit sectors realize the benefit of conserving both human and financial assets and of saving recruitment, training, and outplacement costs. Career assistance is being provided not only for people these organizations plan to terminate, but also for those they want to keep, e.g., valuable employees who are dissatisfied or people whose productivity has slipped for a variety of reasons but whom the organization wants to keep (Kleiman, 1985).

Providing career counseling in the workplace also allows individual employees to improve their job classification and become aware of career path opportunities within the organization. Additionally, it aids an employer in improving employee relations and productivity (Zunker, 1981). The better placed an employee is, the greater his or her satisfaction.

Career development assistance is being provided by outside career counselor consultants hired by an organization, career development specialists who are members of an organization's human resources team, or managers within the organization who have been trained in career pathing and monitoring. Zunker proposes that these programs should include:

1. experience, skills and interest identification;
2. values and needs clarification;
3. education/training, occupational and life planning.

As in other trend areas, providing career development programs at the work site demands additional skills of the counselor -- particularly expertise borrowed from human resource management and training and development. The career development specialist in the workplace must also possess knowledge and skills in the following areas:

1. adult learning and development,
2. training program design,
3. group facilitation,
4. consulting skills (Chalofsky & Gerstein, 1985).

The major concern of counselors providing services in academic or community settings is with the needs and goals of the individual. The counselor providing these same services in the work site must often take into consideration the needs of the organization as well. This may require redefinition of the counselor's role and increased emphasis on counselor ethics.

Summary

Responding to the needs of these "new" clienteles does indeed call for a redefinition of the counselor's role. Counselors must expand their knowledge in the areas of career and adult development as well as family roles. They must increase their information about the world of work and referral resources. They must continue to be aware that older adults, displaced workers, and dual-career couples have needs that differ from the needs of traditional adult clients. They must be prepared to develop and deliver career development programs at the work site. And they must be able to use, understand and evaluate computer programs that serve as aids to career counseling.

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HIGHLIGHTS

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Adult Career Development: An Overview

Adult Career Development: even a decade ago this topic would have generated little debate or interest. Traditional wisdom said that individuals chose careers in their late teens and early 20's and pursued them until retirement. Career planning, if any, occurred in high school.

While the study of career development stopped at age 18, the few theorists who looked at adults tended to use such non-development concepts as maintenance, stabilization, stagnation and decline. Today, however, attitudes, practices and theories are changing, and career planning professionals are being asked to provide assistance to people of all ages and at all stages of career development.

Demographic Factors

The need for adult career planning services is due, in large part, to demographic factors. Life expectancy has increased from 47 years in 1900 to 74 today. The "baby boomers," born 1946-1964, have flooded into the labor market. The number of people aged 65 and older has also increased — by 35% in the last two decades. Over 30,000 Americans are over 100; 2.2 million over 85 (Hodgkinson, 1984).

The impact of women on educational institutions and the paid labor force has been significant. In 1950 fewer than 5% of all women aged 25 and older possessed college degrees; in 1980, 13% did (Spain & Nock, 1984). "Older" women (35+) outnumber older men by almost 2 to 1 in their return to institutions of higher education, and the enrollment of both older groups has increased to 36.8% in five years (Magarrell, 1981). Women's pursuit of professional degrees has also shown a sharp increase in the last three decades; for example, from 4% to 30% in the field of law (Spain & Nock, 1984).

In the labor force, the number of women has increased 109% since 1960, compared to 36% for men. It is predicted that by 1995, 80% of women aged 20-45 will be working in the paid labor force. Women with children under age six have increased their participation from 19% in 1960 to 50% in 1983 (Robey & Russell, 1984).

Technological and Other Factors

More job titles are available today — 40,000 with the last census — and many of them did not exist when current adult workers were making initial career decisions. The fastest percentage gains occur predominantly in the high-tech fields: computer service technicians up 96.8%, computer systems analysts up 85.3%, programmers up 76.9%, and operators up 75.8% (Robey & Russell, 1984).

Other factors creating the need for adult career planning services include: legal changes, such as affirmative action and mandatory retirement laws; psychological concerns about meaning and identity in work; and economic circumstances requiring dual-career or dual-paycheck couples. The traditional pattern of the bread-winning father, the homemaking mother, and two or more school-aged children accounted for only 11% of families in 1980, compared to 60% in 1955.

Theoretical Perspectives

A small but growing body of theory has begun to form around adult development, with a range of viewpoints about whether developmental issues arise from chronological age, stage, or idiosyncratic response to trigger points. On the basis of extensive research with 40 men, some investigators found a low age-variability between developmental periods (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978). Other researchers believe that the crucial factor is society's timing for certain life events and individuals' assessment of being "on-time" or "off-time" (Neugarten, 1968).

In one recently developed model for analyzing adult adaptation to various transitions, the components include: (1) characteristics of the transition, (2) characteristics of the individual, and (3) characteristics of the environment (Schlossberg, 1984). In this perspective, developmental change is less a matter of the change itself and more a matter of the person's *perception* of the change.

Crites (1981) and Super (1983) have also extended their theories to describe adult stages and concerns more accurately, and Rhodes and Doering (1983) have provided a theoretical model that helps one understand the motivations involved in adult career changes. Holland's new book (1985) summarizes well the idea that career changes can appropriately be regarded as efforts to increase the congruence between the person and the work environment.

Problems With the Research

Research in the area of adult development has been extremely limited to date. The most effective research would be longitudinal, which is difficult and expensive to conduct. As a result, most of the research done thus far has been confined to survey and self-report.

Another difficulty with the research has been its predominantly male focus. In the midst of conjecture and early findings, there are indications that male models of adult development may not be appropriate for females, especially childbearing females.

Gilligan (1982) challenges counselors to examine the basic models and perspectives for the "invisible biases" they may hold. She warns practitioners not to assume that the male pattern of human development is the "right" pattern. Her research is an important contribution to aid in critiquing adult development theory for both women and men.

An understanding of adult development theory is important to practitioners in the formation of career planning services for adults. For no matter how diverse the viewpoints, they present important information about the normalcy and stress of change.

New Service Agencies

As new groups are seeking career services, new agencies are emerging to attend to unique and different concerns. Colleges and universities are expanding career services for adults coming or returning to school, but they account for only one-fifth (12 million) of the total number of adults being educated today.

Forty-six million adults are being educated by other agencies or by employers. The federal government, for example, participates through the military, equity legislation for women and minorities, programs for attracting women into nontraditional occupations, national and state information systems, reemployment programs, displaced homemaker centers, and college reentry programs.

Business and industry now spend between $30 and $40 billion on the education and training of adults. These adults are not seeking more of the same services provided to adolescents, but services unique to their own needs. Career planning services in the workplace, a redefinition of employee assistance programs to include career services, assessment centers in business and even in shopping centers, outplacement centers and the like are all logical extensions of a changing population seeking new services.

The problems presented by these individuals are also different, and a taxonomy of adult career problems has emerged. Campbell and Cellini (1981), for example, categorize problems in terms of organizational-institutional performance and/or adaptation. As a result, new diagnostic instruments, assessment tools and interventions become necessary for counselors.

Diagnostic and Assessment Instruments

At least three, relatively new diagnostic instruments have been developed to help interpret one's vocational status: My Vocational Situation (Holland, Daiger, & Power, 1980); The Vocational Decision Scale (Jones & Chenery, 1980); and The Career Decision Scale, (Osipow, Carney, & Barak, 1976). Appropriate assessments for adults have to take into account that these individuals are often years removed from their formal schooling systems and need to incorporate work experience into their planning. The assessment of prior learning and identification of skills that one can transfer from one job to another are examples of this appropriateness. Job-stress related instruments, self-directed instruments (e.g., Self-Directed Search, Quick Job Hunting Map, Career Decision Making System, Micro-SKILLS), and computerized assessments are also appropriate. However the assessment process is defined, it is important to recognize that adults prefer maintaining control and exercising personal input.

New Interventions

What is new is exemplified by the computerized interventions being marketed to adults. American College Testing introduced an adult version of DISCOVER (1984), and Educational Testing Service modified their SIGI (System, 1984) to address adult concerns. Skill assessment, resume writing and job interviewing, job stress exercises, people management tasks, and general personal development ideas are some of the available software. Online assessments and interactive interventions for particular skills are commonplace and improving all the time. It will be important for counselors to help adults sort out the most effective programs for them.

Counselors will also play an increasingly important role with adults as they move into more interactions with computers. How best to do that will remain an issue, especially as computers become part of the home market. For example, many self-directed programs are anything but self-directed and only increase the need for assistance; adults may prefer self-directed learning only if accompanied by one-to-one services.

Networking is of demonstrable importance to adults, as are workshops and other events or programs that facilitate networking. Mentoring is also being promoted as it is better understood. Where these interventions are seen as increasing job morale or performance, more attention will be paid to the outcomes.

Professional counselors working with this type of adult client will need to read regularly, attend inservice workshops, and generally stay involved with resource people and programs as counseling approaches are further refined. In addition to new publications and ongoing journal coverage, AACD's interest group on adult development and aging and state or local networks are excellent sources of support.

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Note: In addition to these references, a list of recommended materials is available upon request. Please direct inquiries to ERIC/CAPS User Services, 2108 School of Education, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1259 (313/764-9492).

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OVERVIEW

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Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

THE ADULT EDUCATION TEACHER'S ROLE IN CAREER PLANNING

Because career development is a lifelong process, adults frequently need career planning assistance. The adult education classroom or learning setting is a natural environment for individuals to seek and receive help with career planning. Following a discussion of the career development needs of adults, this *Overview* describes the appropriate role for the teacher in providing career planning assistance and suggests activities that can be used to support adult career planning in the classroom.

What Are the Career Development Needs of Adults?

According to Deems (1983), adult career development is a process with specific phases or stages, often paralleling human development stages. Career development involves a number of career decisions throughout a lifetime, which means that adults can plan and influence their own careers. However, self-concept as well as the extent to which an individual feels responsible for his or her own future strongly influence the career development process.

Keierleber and Sundal-Hansen (1985) have identified three models of career and adult development that "relate most directly and practically to the issues adult students are concerned about: life roles, concepts of age, and transitions" (p. 252). The life roles model refers to the need to develop priorities for balancing a variety of roles including student, child, parent, spouse, worker, and citizen. Decisions about careers are an integral part of the life roles model; in fact, some have come to equate the term "careers" with the ongoing development and integration of an adult's life roles. The concepts of age model affects career development because adults may feel that career decisions should be age related and as a result, they may impose constraints on their own career development. For example, a 30-year-old male may think he should stay in his original career field rather than "start over" because he feels men should be established in their careers by their early thirties. The transitions model refers to the fact that life events or changes, such as transitions, frequently trigger the need for career planning. Such events include unemployment, dissatisfaction with current job or career, promotions, lack of career mobility, and so forth.

Given the heterogeneity of the adult population, the career development needs of adults range widely. Those adults who have good self-knowledge, who are knowledgeable about employment situations, and who have good decision-making skills are likely only to need information in order to make career decisions (Herr and Cramer 1979). There are many adults, however, whose career development has been characterized as "late, delayed, or impaired," who have very different career development needs (Manuele 1984, p. 101). These adults need to develop more positive self-images, to increase their knowledge of careers and career choices, to increase their ability to use resources, and to improve their decision-making skills before being able to engage in career planning activities.

What Is the Appropriate Role for Teachers in Adult Career Planning?

Either through choice or necessity, more and more adults are seeking career assistance, and in order to address career or job concerns, are frequently enrolling in educational programs (Keierleber and Sundal-Hansen 1985). Therefore, adults may come to rely on the adult education teacher or instructor for their career development needs. Through classroom interactions, adult students come to know and trust their instructors, and as a result feel comfortable discussing concerns or questions related to their careers. Instructors, likewise, acquire knowledge about their adult students that is helpful in providing career planning assistance.

Some career development activities involve counseling and should be provided by a trained professional counselor. Like teaching, counseling is a special skill that requires training and supervised experience. Counselors, for example, are trained to administer and interpret career assessment instruments (Chandler and Hott 1985). Although many career development activities should be carried out in conjunction with a counselor, teachers may also appropriately engage in activities that support or enhance adult career planning. These activities, though, must be related to or compatible with the teacher's major role as deliverer of instruction.

What Activities Can Adult Teachers Engage In to Support Career Planning?

Adult education teachers may appropriately support career planning activities through instructional activities and by serving as a source of information about other career development and planning services.

Instructional Activities

According to Herr and Kramer (1979), teachers and instructors can provide "much of the attitudinal support and knowledge from which more motivated and informed career development may flow" (p. 259). In the area of instruction, this can be done by including information and experiences that link general educational activities to specific vocational or occupational tasks. Some suggestions on how to do this are as follows:

- Include concrete examples of relevant theoretical ideas from occupational settings.
- Help students to acquire and apply appropriate vocabulary.
- Support attitudes of personal mastery or competence among students.
- Reinforce the importance of formulating positive attitudes toward work and acquiring information about a variety of occupations.
- Discuss concepts related to life in organizations such as authority relationships, routine and variety, teamwork, patterns of mobility, and promotions and demotions. (Herr and Kramer 1979)

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In vocational or skill-centered curricula, instructors of adults may support career planning efforts in the following ways:

- Provide current and accurate information about their specific occupational field, including opportunities for contacts with workers and work settings.
- Assist students in analyzing and interpreting their learning experiences in terms of the workplace.
- Plan and provide instruction that prepares individuals to enter, progress, and transfer among jobs in an occupational field or career cluster.
- Assist individuals in identifying a wide range of occupations to which their vocational instruction is applicable.
- Encourage employers to provide information that will expand awareness of career opportunities. (Herr and Kramer 1979)

Instructors may also plan career exploration activities and discuss the importance of capitalizing upon certain personal characteristics in making career decisions. Career exploration often includes examining past experiences to evaluate both vocational and nonvocational successes and failures. This type of exercise can help in identifying skill strengths and weaknesses that may be important in future job decisions. Career exploration may also involve the process of values clarification to assist individuals in identifying priorities related to life-style choices, including careers and occupations (Vetter et al. 1986). Career exploration activities may be included as a part of a unit on life skills.

Depending on the type of course, it may also be appropriate for teachers to provide instruction in specific job hunting skills. Such instruction would include locating information about job openings, completing job applications, and preparing for the interview process.

Information Dissemination and Networking Activities

Assisting individuals in obtaining information related to career planning is a highly important service for adults. Adult students need a variety of kinds of information about: themselves, their values, skills, and interests; occupations and training and credentialing requirements; standard educational requirements; and career education services and resources (Keierleber and Sundal-Hansen 1985). Large numbers of adults only want or need information in order to proceed with their career planning activities (Herr and Kramer 1979). However, since some adults have limited information inquiry, processing, and interpretation skills, they may need assistance in using the information (Keierleber and Sundal-Hansen 1985).

Because teachers have ongoing contact with their students, they can play a key role in helping adults access and use career planning information. To support career planning, teachers might want to provide the following information:

- A list of local resources offering career and educational guidance services
- Lists of local community colleges, colleges, universities, and trade and technical schools
- An overview of job seeking skills including sample resumes, cover letters, interviewing techniques, and ways to seek employment
- A description of how to register with the Employment Securities Commission
- A list of local unions and personnel offices for local government, public schools, and large businesses
- A list of commercially available publications related to job hunting and career development. ("Providing Career and Planning Information" 1986)

Teachers may also serve as "networkers," providing links between adult career development and counseling services both within the institution and the community. Through classroom interactions, teachers are frequently able to identify individuals who need further career services. They should be knowledgeable about the variety of career services and resources available to their adult students in order to refer them to the appropriate sources.

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AIDS/HIV EDUCATION

By Lynn Balster Liontos

If AIDS education hasn't already been mandated by your state, it may be soon. Increasingly, school administrators and board members will feel pressure to implement HIV* education programs. Teenagers are one of the highest at-risk groups, and, as John Washburn, a former superintendent who has AIDS, has pointed out (Kathleen McCormick 1989), education is the only vaccine we presently have against HIV.

When administrators begin to approach this issue, however, they often find themselves aswirl in controversy. HIV education, because it has to do with community values, religious beliefs, and customs, is a complex and sensitive subject. It involves talking about sex and also about death and dying, topics that make many people feel uncomfortable. In addition, although a growing body of research confirms how HIV is and is not transmitted, there's still a great deal of fear based in misinformation and mistrust. The who, what, when, and how of HIV education are all issues that need to be thoroughly explored and discussed before implementing an HIV program.

Why Are Teenagers at Risk?

Adolescents are considered a high risk group because (1) they're exploring their sexual identities and often are experimenting not only with sex but with drugs; (2) their behavior tends to be impulsive and greatly influenced by peer pressure; and (3) they often feel invulnerable and have trouble seeing long-term consequences. McCormick reports that one out of every five cases of AIDS has occurred among those 20-29 or younger, and because of the long incubation period we now believe that many of these young people were infected as adolescents. Changing the behavior of adolescents, says epidemiologist Helene Gayle (McCormick), is going to make a big difference. Thus the goal of HIV education, according to Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines (Dennis Tolsma and others 1988), is to prevent infection through behavior changes.

What Should be Taught When?

Most critics of HIV education support instruction, but often not at the elementary level. However, many young children have fears about AIDS, and the Surgeon General's report on AIDS stresses the need to educate children at an early age. Mainly they need to be reassured that even though AIDS is a serious disease, it's hard to get.

Most educators believe that specific instruction should begin no later than grade 7 (the age at which many kids are either starting to experiment with sex and drugs—or thinking about it). However, unless your state has a mandated curriculum, the age at which children should learn explicit facts about HIV infection may vary, depending on your community.

Controversy also centers around the issue of stressing abstinence only—or the "Just Say No" approach. The CDC thinks that the "Just Say No" approach isn't enough, especially for those teenagers who, no matter what you say, won't abstain from drugs or sex. The 1988 Gallup Poll revealed overwhelming support for schools to teach "safe sex" as a means of preventing HIV transmission (McCormick).

Both the National School Boards Association (NSBA) and the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) were consulted on the development of the CDC guidelines for comprehensive K-12 education. Most educators agree that one-shot programs are acceptable only if there's no other way for students to get information on HIV infection. As family life educator Claire Scholz puts it: "Most kids don't get it the first time" (McCormick). She thinks the study of HIV prevention should be like the study of U.S. history—taught repeatedly and extending knowledge as students become more sophisticated in their understanding. McCormick lists questions to ask in selecting and evaluating the many curricula currently available (as well as pros and cons on developing your own) and also includes an extensive list of resources, plus information on the CDC's computerized database.

Who Should Teach It—and in What Department?

The CDC guidelines recommend using regular classroom teachers at the elementary level. But with secondary programs most educators, along with the CDC, advocate integrating HIV education into health education. William Yarber (1987) says that HIV infection is fundamentally a public health problem, so the most logical place for it is in the communicable disease unit of a health course: "Such placement makes sense pedagogically because health educators are prepared in methods to help students make wise preventive health decisions, which is the essence of AIDS education." If the program is placed in biology, he fears too much emphasis will be placed on biomedical aspects, or if in social studies, on the social/ethical elements. Also, health education teachers are generally more comfortable dealing with the issues of sexuality and death.

But there are other options. Some school systems use family life specialists, science teachers, or home economics departments; in other districts classes are taught by health professionals, such as nurses, physicians, or the Red Cross. Several states have linked HIV education with teen pregnancy prevention programs. Finally, the use of peers has been a significant part of HIV programs in some districts. "Peers are much more effective at altering each other's behavior than teachers or other adults," says Dr. Mervyn Silverman ("Issue Scan" 1989).

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* Actually the term *AIDS* (the clinical stage of the disease) has become obsolete; *HIV infection* (the state of being infected with the human immunodeficiency virus) more accurately defines the problem; thus this term will be used here on.

What about Teacher Training?

Both Katherine E. Keough (1988) and McCormick recommend educating *all* staff—with emphasis on inservice for teachers—before students receive classroom instruction. Staff training might be accomplished through local or state health departments, local hospitals, or a health education specialist. Other questions: Should staff be trained before curriculum decisions are made, or after? Or should they be provided with general HIV education and then specific training once materials are chosen? How will up-to-date information be continually provided?

No matter who is trained to teach HIV education, CDC guidelines emphasize that schools have a responsibility to reach *all* school-age youth. Groups often overlooked include special education students, those who don't speak English, and dropouts or runaways. The latter are usually best reached by working with local youth-oriented agencies. Finally, schools also need to educate parents and the whole community so that they reinforce what schools are teaching.

How Can Controversy Be Avoided or Dealt with?

Develop policies beforehand; don't adopt a "wait and see" approach. There are no foolproof ways for school boards to avoid controversy, says McCormick, but if it's anticipated and planned for, controversy can be managed and constructive.

Focus on process. The process of policy development, for instance, can help resolve disagreements and build consensus and support for HIV education.

Involve the whole community. "Many educators agree that HIV education is more easily accepted," says McCormick, "when the curriculum, materials and activities are developed locally, with the community's needs and values in mind." Do assessments of what your community needs and who's at risk, then work with parents and other groups, including clergy, to reach consensus.

Educate the public. Many school systems credit well-planned public information programs with helping to usher in HIV education without incidence. There are many ways to do this, including community information meetings, letters to parents about HIV and how HIV fits into the curriculum, working with grass-roots organizations, and inviting the community to participate on advisory committees to develop HIV education programs.

Hone your public relations skills. "We think AIDS is the biggest public relations problem we've ever encountered," says National School Public Relations Association Executive Director John Wherry (McCormick). McCormick suggests developing short- and long-range plans for HIV instruction, appointing one spokesperson to deal with press and public inquiries and letting parents, staff, and the community know that curriculum materials are available for review.

Give people time to adjust. Just getting people to talk about HIV education is a first step. You can't reach all the community groups, parents, and teachers and get the kind of support you need to implement a really successful program overnight, says Abelson: "We learn day by day what is needed."

Is it worth it? Can HIV education really be effective? A study on school health education suggests yes (McCormick). Also, comprehensive health education *has* been effective in reducing smoking— and several programs report success in reducing teen pregnancies. As Harvey Fineberg (1988) sums up: "The best we can do in AIDS education offers no guarantee of success. To do less invites failure."

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Alcohol and Drug Use Among Adolescents

Introduction

Drug use among children has been reported to be ten times more prevalent than parents suspect (U.S. Department of Education, 1986). The same problem exists within the schools. The percentage of students using drugs by the sixth grade has tripled over the last decade. Now one in six 13-17 year-olds has used marijuana. Nearly two-thirds of all American young people try an illicit drug before they finish high school (Johnston, O'Malley, & Bachman, 1985).

The following questions must be answered if those in a position to intervene are to acquire the tools for overcoming this pervasive problem: (1) Why does substance abuse exist? (2) How do we identify substance abusers? (3) What is the role of the school? and (4) What are the components of successful prevention programs?

Incidence

A survey reported by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (Department of Health and Human Services, 1982) of men aged 21 to 59 found the highest proportion of drinking problems among the group aged 21 to 24. These studies suggest that alcohol problems begin early among the youth in the United States, increase continuously in each school year, and peak during students' collegiate and post-graduate years.

Added to the prevalence data are changes in the drugs themselves. Johnston et al. (1985) have cautioned against the use of prevalence information alone when trying to gain an understanding of the trends in drug use. There are other dramatic trends. Although prevalence of use of some drugs may be down, the *intensity of use* may be going up (McCurdy, 1986). Today's drugs are more potent and addictive than ever. For example, marijuana today is five to twenty times stronger than it was previously. Crack, a new, highly addictive form of cocaine which is smoked (a particularly dangerous and psychologically addictive method of use) and the so-called new "designer drugs" (analogs of certain illegal drugs) have been known to cause permanent brain damage. Slight increases are also being seen in the use of inhalants and PCP (phenocyclidine). In fact, daily use of inhalants, PCP, and cocaine have become more prevalent than ever (Johnston et al., 1985; McCurdy et al., 1986).

Causes of Substance Abuse

Social pressures, from peer, family, and societal role models are at the top of the list of reasons why adolescents take drugs. Predisposition toward rebelliousness, nonconformity, and independence also figure prominently (Towers, 1987). Also, a high correlation has been found between parental drug use and abuse and drug abuse patterns among their children (Kandel & Yamaguchi, 1985). Some experimentation with mind-altering substances appears to be part of the adolescent "rites of initiation" (Bratter, 1984). During the 1950s, any drug use was considered to be pathological. Thirty years later, in contrast, abstinence from drugs can be defined as "deviant" (Collabolletta, Bratter, & Fossbender, 1983).

Stepping-Stone Theory

There has been much debate about sequential use of drugs. It is likely that the use of a particular drug makes the use of the next drug in the sequence, considered the next most risky or deviant, seem a smaller and more acceptable step. The progressively greater legal tolerance for marijuana, although it may be seen as desirable for reasons of political philosophy, is not a favorable development from the point of view of public health. While all marijuana users do not go on to use harder drugs, they are, nonetheless, the population *at risk* for the use of harder drugs. When the use of marijuana expands, the population at risk grows greater.

It is important to note that alcohol precedes marijuana in the developmental sequence and that alcohol serves as the gateway to other drug use. Stated simply, alcohol use precedes *all* other drug use.

Identification of Adolescent Substance Abuse

Identifying the adolescent alcohol abuser is difficult but possible. Early recognition can result in early intervention and treatment. And treatment is essential because frequent and heavy use of any drug among adolescents is often a coping mechanism for dealing with personal problems that need to be confronted and resolved if normal development is to occur. When drugs are used to cover feelings and to cope with stress, normal adolescent social and psychological growth is blocked.

Specific behaviors and characteristics to watch for to determine whether or not alcohol or other drug abuse is occurring include, but are not limited to, the following:

- frequent absenteeism,
- decline in academic performance,
- conflicts with authority figures,
- problems with peers,
- new peer relationships,
- evidence of self-destructive behavior,
- avoidance and distancing,
- depression,

- lack of energy,
- impulsive behavior,
- lack of concern about personal well-being and hygiene,
- obvious signs of intoxication,
- evidence of a troubled home life.

Those who have substance abuse problems are usually the last ones to realize or admit it. They think they can handle it and feel they are still in control. The process of falling into abuse and addiction is very subtle and the stages of addiction incremental. For this reason identification is not always straightforward. The mechanism of denial can also be at work on the part of parents and other adults.

The Role of the School

The school does not own the responsibility for the students' emotional and physical problems. However, when the school is the only constant in the adolescent's life, and when children of all ages bring their problems (e.g., drug and alcohol) to the school environment and to the athletic field, the school has the obligation to address these problems and try to implement change.

The process of identification is often an overlooked step in many schools' programs. This step is the link between prevention and treatment; its importance cannot be overemphasized. Considering the progressive nature of the problem, and the diminishing hope for recovery as addiction progresses, interventions that can possibly prevent further damage are worth the effort.

Successful school programs have been developed using two components: (a) a "core team" who receive formal training, and (b) a referral system for identifying potential substance abusers.

With a system such as this, teachers are able to identify students exhibiting problematic behavior through the referral system (usually a confidential form). The core team then follows up with another identification process to determine whether or not assessment and intervention are needed.

Treatment is not an issue for schools, apart from referral to outside agencies and aftercare to help the student make the transition back to the school from a treatment facility.

Substance Abuse Prevention

Prevention programs offer more hope for reducing adolescent drug use than any other method. The object is to aim at the reduction, delay, or prevention of drug use before it has become habitual or clearly dysfunctional.

Some recommendations for planning prevention programs include:

Use a Broad-Based Approach. Deter drug use by limiting the availability of drugs and enforcing penalties for use, possession, and distribution. Continue to provide information on the effects of drugs but couple this with social skills training.

Start Prevention Activities Early. Prevention efforts should begin before youngsters are faced with the decision to use drugs, usually between 12 and 18 years of age.

Help High-Risk Students First. We know from research, experience, and common sense that some kids are at greater risk of becoming drug abusers than others.

Cover All Bases. Prevention efforts should be a continuum of interrelated and complementary activities including those at school, at home, and in the community.

Conclusion

The importance of prevention and early intervention cannot be overemphasized. Substance abuse problems, if left unrecognized, will, in most cases, get worse. One does not have to be trained as a counselor to recognize signs and symptoms. Intuition is a valuable tool. Most people just need an established channel for referral and assessment and a sense of responsibility.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Alcohol Use Among College Students

Introduction

Students on some college campuses use alcohol to signify their emerging adulthood, to enhance social gatherings, and to cope with stress. As studies have revealed the extent of excessive or problem drinking, however, college administrators have become increasingly concerned about understanding and controlling alcohol use and abuse. In states that have raised the drinking age to 21, college administrators must also consider relevant legal issues. Physical injury and loss of life among students provide additional compelling reasons to address the problem of excessive drinking (Shore & Rivers, 1985). College personnel need to understand the causes and consequences of problem drinking and tailor educational and counseling programs to the students' needs.

Identification of Problem Drinking

Negative Consequences. One way to identify problem drinking is in terms of its negative consequences. At colleges these problems include a reduction in classroom performance, lowered grades, difficulties in residence hall management, and destruction to property (Shore & Rivers, 1985). Administrators believe that alcohol is involved in damage to residence halls, violent behavior, violation of campus policies, physical injuries, and emotional difficulty. Also attributed to alcohol-caused behavior are 29% of academic failures and 21% of students who do not remain in school (Anderson & Gadaleto, 1985). Engs and Hanson (1985) have also found a significant incidence of hangovers, drinking while driving, and missing class because of hangovers.

Excessive Consumption and Intoxication. Another way of identifying problem drinking is by the amount and frequency of students' alcohol consumption. One study classified students into four groups based on amount and frequency—abusers, users, weekenders, and socials—and identified behavior differences among the groups (Hetherington & Keene, 1985). Meyer (1986) and Johnston, Bachman, and O'Malley (1986) have shown that although most college students confine their drinking to weekends, they tend to drink heavily on such occasions (five or more drinks in a row). This pattern is increasing among college students at the same time that it is decreasing among their non-college age mates and among high school students (Johnston et al., 1986).

Reasons for Drinking. As Berkowitz and Perkins (1986b) have noted, problem drinkers have distinctive motivational patterns and, therefore, drinking for certain kinds of reasons may itself define problem drinking. Some problem drinkers use alcohol to control stress (Beck & Summons, 1985) or to cope with negative affect (Johnston et al., 1986). Studies of DWI (Driving While Intoxicated) offenders indicate that they appear to drink in isolation and for coping with stress. Other studies suggest college students drink in a more social atmosphere with the intention of getting drunk. This seems to indicate a more recreational and perhaps experimental approach to alcohol use by the college students (Beck & Summons, 1985). Alcohol educators should be especially sensitive to students who use alcohol as a coping mechanism.

Correlates of Problem Drinking

Personality and Gender. Compared to nonproblem drinkers, problem drinkers are impulsive, prone to deviant behavior, less oriented toward academic success, more independence-seeking, and more likely to drink for escapist reasons (Berkowitz & Perkins, 1986b). With regard to gender differences, information on the increase/decrease in use among college women is conflicting. However, the prevalence of heavy drinking remains much greater for males than females (Johnston et al., 1986). Women also show a greater resistance to drinking than do men, except in dormitory living situations (Shore & Rivers, 1985).

Peer, Family, and Environmental Influences. The greatest influence on college students' drinking is their peers. As Shore and Rivers (1985) point out, variables related to influences prior to college, i.e., family, religion and parental alcohol consumption, do not appear to be highly related to RDP (resistance to pressure to drink), but variables within the college environment, such as class standing and living unit, seem to correlate with RDP. Shore and Rivers suggest that perhaps students view college as a "time out" from the "real world," with its own rules and expectations, and look to the college world for guidance and standards. Misperceptions about alcohol use abound, especially among freshmen students. Most students and resident advisors perceive a more liberal norm when a more moderate norm actually exists (Berkowitz & Perkins, 1986a). That is, students have relatively conservative personal attitudes toward drinking, but believe the general attitude to be quite liberal. Misperceptions tend to increase with increasing size of the social group (friends, housing peers, campus at large) and increasing social distance between the group and the perceiver (Perkins & Berkowitz, 1986).

Explanations for increases in drinking or acceptance of problem drinking include broadbased changes in American society—roles of women, alternative life styles, and intergroup relations (Engs & Hanson, 1985). For specific problems, for example, the rise in drinking while driving, the causes seem to be complicated. Although studies indicate that raising the legal drinking age contributes to

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reduced drinking while driving, the legal prohibition against drinking for young adults may make automobiles a "safe" place for them to drink. That is, automobiles may provide a place where under-age students can drink away from school or other authorities. Increased heavy drinking, or drinking rapidly to destroy the evidence, may be a factor in the increase in hangovers and missing class because of hangovers (Engs & Hanson, 1985).

Counseling and Alcohol Education Programs

Since many students do not seek out individual counseling, alcohol education coordinators often must rely on other methods of education such as multi-media campaigns, group sessions, and special classes and seminars. Hetherington and Keene (1985) have designed a program based on classifying students by the amount and frequency of their alcohol consumption. The specific methods for counseling each student user group include the following:

Abusers: Address psychological issues; stress the emotional impact of large amounts of alcohol; include a discussion of alcohol use and families (children of alcoholics are more likely to be abusive drinkers).

Weekenders: Address the relationship between alcohol use and social issues. Include students in organizing campus events; see that such events are nonalcoholic.

Users: Address the effects of alcohol use over time and the physiological effects of alcohol; teach bartending for nonalcoholic drinks.

Socials: Address students' feelings regarding peer expectations; include a section on assertion skills and information on the role of advertising in creating drinking expectations; discuss social pressure.

Descriptions of effective alcohol policies indicate that prohibiting students from drinking on campus is usually not effective, and that providing guidelines on proper ways of handling drinking situations can help those who choose to drink. Administrators and alcohol education coordinators would be wise to take campus size/organization, student characteristics, and peer influences into account when planning alcohol education programs (Shore & Rivers, 1985).

Typical responses to the alcohol problem by school officials include the following: (1) seeking help from off-campus drug treatment facilities, residence hall staff, and alcohol education coordinators; (2) providing group counseling for students who are problem drinkers; (3) making sanctions more stringent for behavioral infractions that involve alcohol; (4) specifying the conditions under which group activities may involve alcohol; and (5) making advertising standards more stringent (e.g., alcohol cannot be advertised as the primary focus of an event, and off-campus establishments may not run "happy hour" advertisements) (Anderson & Gadaleto, 1985).

Some reports indicate that administrative attention to college students' drinking has resulted in stronger policies concerning student alcohol consumption on campus, increased reporting of alcohol-related problems by campus police or counseling and student health services, and increased alcohol education programming. This heightened emphasis on alcohol-related issues may itself contribute to reported increases in problem drinking, but the fact remains that the problems have always been there and still exist. The efforts of all college personnel to address these problems therefore continue to be needed.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Assessing Counselor Performance

Assessment of counselor performance is frequently discussed in professional counseling literature, yet it remains a topic that includes numerous significant issues and few points of agreement. This digest describes some of those major issues and offers recommendations for effective assessment of counselor performance.

Need for Assessing Counselor Performance

The need for assessing counselor performance, although it has not received much specific attention, is evident for several reasons. Counseling usually helps people but also can harm them, for example, through inappropriate counselor-client pairings or through counselor incompetence. Counselor performance assessment is necessary to facilitate good counselor-client matches and/or to remedy incompetence. Assessment of counselor performance thus is inextricably linked to and needed for protection of the public's welfare.

Counselor certification and licensure also are intended to protect the public's welfare. Possession of an academic degree in a counseling specialty is one common credentialing criterion, but academic credentials do not necessarily indicate counseling competence (Hogan, 1980). Therefore, effective assessment of counselor performance is needed in counselor credentialing processes as well.

This need for assessment of counselor performance also relates to the counseling profession itself. A profession evolves positively only when its members continue to improve their functioning. Such development in the counseling profession depends upon having effective methods of evaluating common *and* innovative ways of functioning. Counselor performance assessment thus has the potential to improve the counseling profession.

Areas of Assessment in Counselor Performance

Three general areas related to effective counselor performance have been investigated. The first is counselor characteristics, the study of which is based on the belief that "good" counselors have unique and identifiable personal characteristics, and that if identified, those characteristics can be used as counselor trainee selection criteria. This line of reasoning or investigation generally has not proved fruitful. However, it has continued because of the recognition that clients react differentially to counselor characteristics (sometimes irrespective of the counselor's skills) and that those reactions are important components of counseling outcomes. Today, the study of counselor characteristics is refocused and is intended to facilitate "matching" of counselors and clients. Many counselor characteristics are being investigated; however, Hiebert (1984) has suggested this effort would be better invested in defending the worth of counseling services.

Counselor communication skills have been a second area of extensive study. Verbal communication skills have been examined far more than nonverbal skills, but both are important components of effective counselor performance. Because effective communication is at the heart of counseling, assessment of counselors' communication skills is a primary means of assessing counselor performance.

Although key indicators of counselor performance, counseling outcomes have been investigated even less than either of the other areas. This is due to major difficulties in determining significant outcomes as well as in obtaining data from clients after counseling has ended. Nonetheless, the assessment of counseling outcomes is essential for fully effective assessment of counselor performance.

Methods of Assessment

The assessment of counselor performance includes both subjective and objective processes, with the former far more common. Subjective evaluations of counselor performance include the use of rating forms, judgments of counselors' actual counseling activities, and global judgments by supervisors.

Instruments for assessing counselor performance range from highly subjective instruments that often are quickly created and at best have some degree of face validity, to those that have measurable, empirically established psychometric properties. Two of the latter have found particular favor in the counseling profession—the *Counselor Evaluation Inventory* and the *Counselor Rating Form*. Each has been shown to be effective for evaluating counselor performance (Biersner, Bunde, Doucette, & Culwell, 1981; Dorn & Jereb, 1985). Moreover, they are suitable for use by different types of persons who might evaluate counselor performance (e.g., clients, counselors, or supervisors). Rating forms have the decided advantage of being structured, efficient means of gathering assessment data.

Assessment of performance during counseling is usually accomplished through review of audio or video tape excerpts. Review of taped excerpts has the advantage of allowing assessment (usually through ratings of skills shown) of actual counselor performance, but it has the disadvantage of inefficiency. There also is much debate about the number and length of excerpts needed for valid evaluations (Lecomte & Bernstein, 1981).

Counselor performance assessments based on supervisors' judgments are becoming more common because of their use in counselor credentialing processes.

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Unfortunately, such judgments are often clouded by perceptions of the person (as opposed to performance) and hesitancy to give negative evaluations. Subjective, global supervisor evaluations are not particularly effective indicators of counselors' performance levels.

Objective assessments are based on indicators of client behavior change, and data from these provide the strongest indications of counselor performance effectiveness. Unfortunately, counseling impacts infrequently are specified in terms of behavior change, with the result that few good examples of this type of counselor performance assessment exist. In addition, there is some evidence to indicate that subjective and objective measures of counselor performance yield unrelated results (Alexander & Wilkins, 1982).

Assessors of Counselor Performance

Counselors and their peers, supervisors, administrators, and clients generally are those who assess counselor performance. Counselor self-assessments are common, but probably most useful to counselors themselves (Eldridge, 1981). Because of high subjectivity, self-assessments generally do not have broad utilitarian value. Peer evaluations of counselors also are used frequently, but the competence of peers to make valid assessments is a significant issue in their use. Supervisors are generally deemed competent to assess counselor performance, but often use criteria different from those of other assessors (Butcher & Scofield, 1984). For example, supervisors often are interested in levels of skills demonstrated, whereas administrators are usually interested in accountable outcomes.

Clients are the group most frequently asked to assess counselor performance, but their evaluations also have limitations. They may not be aware of appropriate evaluation criteria, focus only upon general satisfaction, or resist making negative evaluations of counselors. Nonetheless, as counseling service consumers, their evaluations are important.

Time of Assessment

Assessments of counselor performance may be made during counselors' preservice training, immediately after counseling, or as long-term follow-up. The vast majority of such assessments are made during training, sometimes to screen out incompetent trainees. More frequently, however, performance assessments made during training are formative in nature, intended to help trainees achieve required levels of competence before graduation.

Assessments of counselor practitioner performance are usually made for accountability purposes and therefore are summative in nature. Although the need for counselor accountability often has been stressed, that need apparently has not prompted much counseling practitioner performance assessment.

Long-term follow-up assessments of counselor performance are rare, probably because of difficulties in obtaining data from clients long after counseling has ended. However, such data are needed to determine if counseling has lasting effects.

Recommendations for Counselor Performance Assessment

The professional literature suggests that more effective assessments of counselor performance can be achieved through the following:

- Greater emphasis on client behavior change indicators to provide stronger data for counselor accountability.
- Use of multiple assessments, including both subjective and objective procedures, to provide more comprehensive information on the impacts of counseling.
- Further development of instruments used to assess counselor performance to facilitate gathering of data that is theoretically and psychometrically defensible.
- More frequent assessment of counseling practitioner performance, including long-term follow-up studies, to provide more data on the "real world" functioning of counselors.

These improvements are needed because effective assessment of counselor performance is essential to further enhancement of the counseling profession and to protection of the public's welfare.

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AT-RISK STUDENTS

By Margarita Donnelly

Nationally over 25 percent of the potential high school graduates drop out before graduation. In some major cities the rate is 40 percent. Higher standards in the public schools have affected millions of minority and disadvantaged students who are "at-risk." Educational reform has changed the rules before the system has had a chance to accommodate to an increasing number of students who are dropping out and becoming a burden to society. The identification of at-risk students and the development of programs to prevent their failure are needed components of educational reform.

What are the characteristics of at-risk students?

At-risk students are students who are not experiencing success in school and are potential dropouts. They are usually low academic achievers who exhibit low self-esteem. Disproportionate numbers of them are males and minorities. Generally they are from low socioeconomic status families. Students who are both low income and minority status are at higher risk; their parents may have low educational backgrounds and may not have high educational expectations for their children.

At-risk students tend not to participate in school activities and have a minimal identification with the school. They have disciplinary and truancy problems that lead to credit problems. They exhibit impulsive behavior and their peer relationships are problematic. Family problems, drug addictions, pregnancies, and other problems prevent them from participating successfully in school. As they experience failure and fall behind their peers, school becomes a negative environment that reinforces their low self-esteem.

How can they be identified, and at which age?

Some evaluation instruments that have been used in identifying potential dropouts include the Elementary School Pupil Adjustment Scale (ESPAS) for identifying poorly adjusted students in grades K-3, the Dropout Alert Scale (DAS) for grades 4-12, and the Student Sensitivity Index (SSI) for grades 7-12 (see Cage and others 1984).

At-risk students need to be identified as early as possible and regularly reevaluated because their family status and living situations can change. Some researchers believe that the roots of at-risk behavior begin in the elementary grades with low achievement patterns, high absenteeism, and low self-esteem. Programs identifying and working with at-risk students are needed at every grade level. Teachers should be well trained and alert to the symptoms of at-risk student behavior, and administrative staff should be responsive to their needs. It is especially important that teachers dealing with minority students have training in language and cultural differences. Schools need to be a model for equal opportunity and a place where the individual's needs for achievement and positive experiences can be met. The needs of minority students, low income students, and students with special problems must be addressed.

What kinds of programs are effective in helping at-risk students?

Successful programs often separate at-risk students from other students, they relate work to education, are small, have low student-to-teacher ratios, and provide counseling and supportive services. Most programs emphasize flexibility, tailoring curriculum to the learning needs of the individual students. They are often innovative, providing alternatives to traditional promotion policies, structuring curriculum in nontraditional ways, offering early childhood education programs, and including vocational education in alternative settings.

Effective programs are involved in a broad range of special services to help at-risk students improve their low self-esteem while providing a supportive system in which they can begin to have positive experiences. These include remediation programs, tutoring, child care services, medical care, substance abuse awareness programs, bilingual instruction, employment training, and close followup procedures on truancy and absenteeism.

Finally, successful programs are service-intensive; they provide students personal contact with a qualified, caring staff. Schools often work with the community to identify at-risk students and to instruct parents on how to help their at-risk children.

The New Haven Schools Project (CT) is an innovative nineteen-year-old project in the New Haven elementary schools. Administrators, parents, teachers, and support staff work collaboratively to provide at-risk students a climate in which they are able to become successful. Achievement levels have been raised while attendance and behavior problems have been lowered. One school originally ranking thirty-third citywide now ranks third in achievement. The New Haven Schools Project has successfully motivated at-risk students to achieve at a higher level academically and socially (Comer 1987).

How does the current push for excellence affect at-risk students?

Federal financial support for education fell 11 percent between 1980-87 while the numbers of disadvantaged students grew nationwide by 20 percent. During the same period the educational reform movement has diverted funds from elementary and middle schools to high school reform programs. Many more students are currently at-risk than ever before while educational standards are rising nationwide.

Stricter standards for high school graduation in Florida have produced the largest percentage of dropouts (38 percent) in a state nationwide. When the graduation requirement of a 1.5 gradepoint average takes effect in 1987 the dropout rate is expected to rise even higher.

Recognizing that higher standards impose a "forbidding barrier" rather than a challenge for at-risk students, the Governors' Task Force on Readiness has prepared a national "action agenda" for states to follow to help at-risk students meet higher educational standards. Among other initiatives, the task force recommended "establishing a mechanism for state intervention when school districts fail to make progress with low-achieving students," and developing incentives for "effective school and classroom procedures and practices" (quoted by Riley 1986).

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Brief Family Consultation in Schools

Introduction

Brief family consultation is a short-term strategy that enlists the home and school in an attempt to solve childhood behavior problems. It is ideally suited to a school setting where there are severe limitations on the counselor's time. Further, the skills involved draw upon those that are taught in most counselor education programs: active listening, behavior modification, and interpersonal communication.

Brief family consultation, in common with family therapy, is based on systems theory. Systems theorists assume that the presenting problem is not that of the child alone. Individual problems are seen as relationship problems. Experienced counselors are aware of the importance of working closely with the family when a child exhibits behavior problems. The family is in a powerful position to support or sabotage the best efforts of counselors and teachers on a child's behalf (Palmo, Lowry, Weldon, & Scioscia, 1984).

Assessment

A functional family can make rapid gains in counseling; a dysfunctional family will bog down in rigidly fixed patterns of communication and will resist the school counselor's attempts at change. Therefore, a quick method of assessing a family is important to the success of a short-term strategy.

A functional family, that is, one that will respond successfully to a brief intervention, will score "high marks" on each of these criteria: (a) parental resources, (b) chronicity, (c) communication between family members, (d) parental authority, and (e) rapport with professional helpers (Golden, 1988).

Parental resources. Are these parents capable of providing for their child's basic needs (food, shelter, and care)? A stable marriage, an extended family, and gainful employment are resources that work in favor of the parent's attempt to bring a child's misbehavior under control. On the other hand, young, immature, single parents have fewer resources at their disposal. Families in which there is a history of extreme poverty or alcoholism bring very limited capacity to the task of managing childhood behavior problems.

Chronicity. An acute problem with an identifiable psychosocial stressor presents an opportunity for behavior management; a chronic problem may indicate the need for long-term therapy. A parent's response such as, "She's always been a difficult child," suggests a less favorable prognosis than, "His grades have gone downhill since October, that's when I lost my job."

Communication between family members. Can family members communicate well enough to solve problems? According to Satir (1972), there is a normal tendency to close down communication during periods of stress. In dysfunctional families, closed communication is the rule, not the exception. This closed system is maintained by yelling, blaming, sarcasm, or more ominously, silence.

The following interaction illustrates a closed, defensive system:

> *Counselor:* (To 9-year-old) Tell your father how he can help you or encourage you to get better grades.
>
> *Father:* (Angrily interrupts) He would have to change his entire attitude before I'll help with a damn thing! He wants to squeak by doing nothing and that's just what he'll amount to!
>
> *Mother:* (Putting her arm around Jeff and addressing Father) You can't expect a child to do hours of homework after being in school all day long and on top of doing all of those ridiculous chores you make him do.

With his furious outburst, Father ensures that a meaningful dialogue with Jeff will be avoided. Mother reinforces her son's dependency by speaking on his behalf against Father.

Parental authority. Are parents effective in asserting authority? Parents in functional families hold an "executive" position within the family organization. In dysfunctional families parents surrender authority in the hope that conflict with the child can be avoided. Children in such families are often out of control.

Rapport with professional helpers. Can parents and professionals work together as a team? Do parents return phone calls? Are they punctual for conferences? Central to the issue is follow-through; the functional family does its "homework." Conversely, are the child's teachers responsive to parents?

Interventions

An accurate assessment of family functioning helps the school counselor decide which intervention to choose. A child in a dysfunctional family may need a referral for family therapy. A brief family consultation, however, may be sufficient for a misbehaving child in a functional family.

A brief family consultation requires three to five face-to-face family conferences. The process is best described by an example of what the counselor might say to parents in the initial interview. In this case, Brent, a sixth-grader, presents a problem of getting into fights.

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> I am interested in working with you for a short period of time, no more than five conferences, to help get Brent to stop fighting. I think you can manage this situation with only a little help from me and there is cause for optimism. Before he started 6th grade, there were no reports of any fighting. Brent is earning good grades and, except for fighting, is well-behaved. As parents, you have shown that you want to cooperate with school authorities to get this problem solved. For my part, I'll coordinate a team effort to include you, Brent's teachers, and Brent, himself, if he is willing. If he is not, we are still going to do everything we can to change his behavior.

The family, and perhaps the teachers, will want to know about their time commitment. When a brief consultation exceeds five family conferences without resolution of the problem, another option, such as a referral for family therapy, is called for. The time limitation can be therapeutic simply by exerting pressure for results on consultant, teachers, and parents (Chandler, 1983). Typically, the task of the teachers is to provide the parent with a daily report of the child's behavior. Note that contacts with the family are called "conferences," not "sessions, " because of the therapeutic associations of the latter term. Likewise, the term "consultation" serves to emphasize that the family does not need nor will it be receiving "therapy."

According to Haley (1980), parents must agree on three issues if they are to manage their child's behavior: (a) the specific behaviors that are desired from the child, (b) the mechanism by which the parents will know if their child has behaved in the desired way, and (c) the consequences for behavior or misbehavior. If marital discord surfaces, parents should be encouraged to work toward agreement for the good of their child and deal with their marital problems at some later time.

Family members may shut down communication in response to stress, such as that caused by a child's misbehavior. Unfortunately, it is precisely during a stressful episode that open communication is most important. A gentle and respectful application of basic, active listening skills (e.g., paraphrasing, reflection) will usually suffice to get people talking.

Parents are encouraged to take control of resources that could serve as reinforcers. For example, a child who is "independently wealthy," sporting a big allowance and a *room full of electronic equipment, is in a position to ignore* his parents' demands for behavior change. In this case, the child's allowance should be reduced to zero. He/she earns money by behaving responsibly.

Many of the best laid behavioral plans are defeated by ambivalence. In any brief strategy, the motto must be, "Go for it!" Continuation of problematic behavior, even in an otherwise competent child, may result in a negative and habitual style of coping with stress.

Limitations

While a systems intervention has great advantages over individual counseling, there are circumstances when an individual approach is desirable. If the family system is highly maladaptive, indeed, destructive, the task for the counselor may be to help the child develop sufficient self-worth and enough self-reliant behaviors to function independently.

A weakness of the systems approach is that the process is crippled if a key family member refuses to participate. However, a brief intervention can be effective in single-parent families (Golden, 1983).

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Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Recent expansion of work-based career development programs has resulted in a larger literature base. Because career development is increasingly regarded as the shared responsibility of employee and employer, the importance of this topic is likely to grow. Of interest to employers, human resource staff, and adult educators, this **ERIC** Digest discusses the purposes of career development programs in the workplace and describes the components of such programs. Guidelines for the creation of an organizational career development program are presented.

What Is Career Development?

Career development refers to "the outcomes of actions on career plans as viewed from both individual and organizational perspectives" (Gutteridge 1986, p. 52). The outcomes desired by organizations include achieving the best match between people and jobs. Individuals' desired outcomes range from status to job flexibility to monetary rewards, depending upon the situation.

Career development is just one component of human resource management in organizations. Others include control and evaluation, organizational design, and human resource planning (Gutteridge 1986).

Why Is Career Development Necessary?

Both external and internal factors influence the need for career development. Among these factors, Slavenski and Buckner (1988) list the following:

- o The need to identify and forecast personnel needs
- o Social and demographic trends
- o The changing nature of work
- o Changing types of jobs
- o Equity and a multicultural work force
- o Worker productivity
- o Technological change and decreasing advancement opportunities
- o Organizational philosophies

Employers are motivated to establish career development programs because such programs are seen as an effective response to various personnel problems, because top managers prefer to promote existing employees and to ensure a good fit between the work and the worker, and because employees have expressed interest in career development as a benefit (Gutteridge 1986). Above all, "most organizations adopt career development programs in response to pragmatic human resource concerns and because they believe it will help ensure a continued supply of qualified, talented personnel" (Gutteridge 1986, p. 58).

What Is the Management Cycle?

The management cycle provides a framework for career development practice. Each of the steps in the management cycle corresponds to career development strategies that help both manager and employee maximize career growth (Slavenski and Buckner 1988). These steps, with appropriate career development tasks, are the following:

Hire or promote. Strategies at this phase focus on assessing job candidates and hiring or promoting the person whose skills and interests best match the job.

Orient or communicate. This step involves making known to the new employee what is expected, what the organizational culture is like, and what the value systems are. Some companies establish mentoring programs to assist with this task.

Observe performance. Employee performance is measured with reference to expectations. Feedback is provided.

Manage performance. Employees are rewarded for their strengths. Positive aspects of performance are emphasized.

Develop employee. Various tools can be used for staff development, including inservice training, career planning workshops, and counseling and assessment services. At this stage, managers may place employees with high potential on the "fast track."

Make personnel selection decisions. As organizational needs arise, potential employees are recruited and the cycle starts again with a job match.

What Are the Components of a Career Development Program?

Slavenski and Buckner (1988) divide the career development process into three distinct phases: (1) staffing and orientation, (2) evaluation, and (3) development. Each of these phases is composed of strategies from which the employer may choose to create a customized career development system.

The **staffing and orientation phase** is composed of providing career information to the job candidate (whether internal or external) and using selection techniques to match potential workers with the right job. The type of career information provided may include knowledge of jobs within the organization and possible career paths for the employee. Selection techniques that are used to match employee and employment opportunity include assessment center exercises and job posting systems even for positions that are to be filled internally (a form of self-selection).

The next phase is the **evaluating phase.** Two key tasks in this phase are performance review and succession planning. The purpose of performance review, from a career development perspective, is to provide feedback to employees on their skills and knowledge, both to increase

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job satisfaction and to help them prepare for their next job. Succession planning, at the initiative of the employer, links information from and about individual employees to the human resource needs of the organization.

During the **developing phase,** more visible career development strategies are employed. Tools used during this phase include career discussions between employee and supervisor, career resource centers, self-assessment and career counseling, and career planning workshops.

Career discussions between employee and supervisor form an integral part of any career development system. Training supervisors for their career discussion role is necessary for success; even more important and difficult is convincing supervisors to apply that training.

Career resource centers have been found to be effective if they support a larger career development system. According to Slavenski and Buckner, employees view career resource centers as a concrete symbol of company support of career development and openness of information.

Although career counseling does exist in organizations, self-assessment is a more common tool. A trend appears to be the formal incorporation of career counseling into employee assistance programs, as career issues become more complex. Career workbooks and similar activities are currently among the most popular self-assessment tools.

Recent policy trends have guided the design and use of career development workshops. Among the most important are the following trends:

- o Emphasis on teaching employees to feel more power
- o Less encouragement for employees to explore other career fields; focus on employees experiencing success in their current jobs
- o Emphasis on life career planning

For example, IBM's career planning workshop focuses on the interests, skills, and contributions inherent in the individual's current job. Employees study their jobs' components and learn how to make the work more challenging. In addition, participants learn how jobs evolve from business needs (Bardsley 1987).

How Is a Career Development Program Established?

The first step in establishing career development in the workplace is the assessment of organizational needs and the needs of individual employees. Several ready-made instruments exist to help organizations with this step, including "What's Your Career Development Quotient?" by Farren, Kaye, and Leibowitz and the "Career Development Opportunity Inventory" by Goldner, Hutcheson, and Otte. These instruments assist the organization with determining what is already working in career development and what is needed (Slavenski and Buckner 1988).

Leibowitz, Farren, and Kaye (1985) present a model for designing and implementing a career development system. Their guidelines include the following:

- o State specifics
- o Tie the program to overall human resource development
- o Tailor the program to the culture
- o Build from a conceptual base
- o Plan long-term approaches, short-term payoff
- o Design multiple approaches
- o Co-design and manage the project
- o Ensure top management support
- o Publicize accomplishments

Evaluating the system and improving it based on those evaluations are also important steps in the creation process. Like employee career growth, program growth should be continual.

Slavenski and Buckner (1988) conclude their paper with a list of recommendations garnered from the literature and from their own experiences with career development in the workplace. Among their recommendations for persons designing and implementing career development are the following:

- o Link new programs to other parts of the career development system
- o Design the program in terms of the specific organizational culture
- o Think of career development as a process, not a program
- o Involve line management

In summary, career development is now viewed as the shared responsibility of employee and employer. Employers are implementing career development in order to match work and workers for optimal productivity. Various tools exist that organizations can use as part of their career development system. Employers wishing to develop such a system should first assess organizational needs and then decide which components of career development systems would work best in their culture. Finally, it is important to evaluate and continue to improve the career development system.

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HIGHLIGHTS

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Career Development: The Contemporary Scene and the Future

Evolving Meanings of Career Development

Modern theories of career development began appearing in literature during the 1950s. At that time the occupational choice focus of the first forty years of career development began to give way to a broader, more comprehensive view of individuals and their occupational development over the life span. Occupational choice began to be viewed as a developmental process. The term *vocational development* became popular in the '50s as a way to describe the broadening view of occupational choice.

By the 1960s, the terms *career* and *career development* became popular. This expanded perception of career and career development was more useful than the earlier view of career development as occupational choice because it broke the time barrier that had previously restricted the vision of career development to only a cross-sectional view of an individual's life.

In the 1970s, the definitions of *career* and *career development* used by some writers became broader and more encompassing.

Gysbers and Moore (1975, 1981) proposed the concept of *life career development* in an effort to expand and extend career development from an occupational perspective to a life perspective in which occupation (and work) has place and meaning. They defined life career development as self-development over the life span through the integration of roles, settings, and events of a person's life.The word *life* in the definition means that the focus is on the total person -- the human career. The word *career* identifies and relates the roles in which individuals are involved (worker, learner, family, citizen); the settings where individuals find themselves (home, school, community, work place); and the events that occur over their lifetimes (entry job, marriage, divorce, retirement). Finally, the word *development* is used to indicate that individuals are always in the process of becoming. When used in sequence, the words *life career development* bring these separate meanings together, but at the same time, a greater meaning emerges. Life career development describes unique people with their own life styles.

Diversity of Programs, Tools, and Techniques

The national Career Development Association's third decennial volume, *Designing Careers*, Gysbers and Associates (1984) documented the rapid expansion in and the almost bewildering diversity of career development programs, tools, and techniques available today to help individuals. They project that this expansion will continue into the foreseeable future. Also, they point out that these programs, tools, and techniques are better organized, are more frequently theory-based, and are used more systematically than ever before. Finally, they project that these emphases will continue into the future.

Let us look more specifically at what is involved in this major trend. The theory and research base of counseling psychology has been expanded and extended substantially during the past twenty years, but particularly during the past ten years.

Expanding Populations and Settings

At the turn of the century, one focus for counseling was to help young people in transition from school to work to make occupational choices in line with their understandings about themselves and the work world through a process called *true reasoning* (Parsons, 1909). Today, young people still are the recipients of counseling and will be in the future. Additional populations to be served by counseling have been added over the years and have included such groups as individuals with handicapping conditions, college students, the disadvantaged, and unemployed individuals. As the world in which we live and work continues to become more complex, the needs of people in these populations for counseling will increase, not decrease.

As new concepts about career development began to appear and evolve, it became obvious that people of all ages and circumstances had career development needs and concerns, and that they and society could and would benefit from career development programs, services, and counseling. Two such concepts, in particular, had an effect. First was the shift from a point-in-time focus to the life-span focus for career development. And second was the personalization of the concept of career (the human career) relating it to life roles, settings, and events. By introducing these two concepts, the door opened for counseling personnel to provide programs to a wide range of people of all ages in many different kinds of settings.

Adult Career Development. The newer concept of career development emerged as a result of and in response to the continuing changes that are taking place in our social, industrial, economic, and occupational environments and structures. Because of these changes, adults and adult career development became a focal point for an increasing number of career development theorists and practitioners in the 1970s (Campbell & Cellini, 1981). This focus continued into the 1980s and, in all probability, will continue into the future. As a result, institutions and agencies that serve adults traditionally have added career development components, including counseling. And, new agencies and organizations have been established to provide adults with career development programs, services, and counseling where none had existed.

Career development programs, services, and counseling in business and industry also became a focal point in the 1970s and 1980s. This trend, too, will continue and probably be intensified in the foreseeable future. More businesses and industries, as well as many other organizations, are realizing the benefits of these activities for their employees. And if employees benefit, then the organizations benefit as well.

Career Development in the School Setting. As definitions of career and career development have evolved, and become broader and more encompassing, particularly during the past twenty years, there has been a corresponding broadening and expansion of career guidance programs and services to children and young people in our schools. And, they do have an impact (Campbell, Connell, Kinnel-Boyle, & Bhaerman, 1983; Hotchkiss & Vetter, 1987; Prediger & Sawyer, 1986).

Although it is clear that a broad definition of career and career development opens up more possibilities and opportunities for programs and services for children, young people, and adults than a narrow definition, it is equally clear that other variables are involved. The changing economic, occupational, industrial, and social environments and structures in which people live and work have created conditions and needs not previously present. Individuals must now give more attention to their career development. In addition, a more complex understanding of human growth and development from counseling and career psychology, and the corresponding improvement of intervention strategies and resources, have helped in the expansion and extension of career guidance programs in the elementary and secondary schools as well as other educational and agency settings.

The Future. As these trends converge, they have begun to shape a new focus for career guidance programs for the future. What will be the focus of career guidance programs in the future? Will future programs be remedial, emphasize crises, and deal with immediate concerns and issues in people's lives? Will they be developmental and emphasize growth experiences and long-range planning activities? Or, will they do both? The sense of the trends discussed in *Designing Careers* (Gysbers & Associates, 1984) and in the literature in general clearly indicate that career guidance programs of the future will respond to the developmental, long-term career needs of students, as well as to their more immediate career crises needs.

Traditionally, career guidance programs have focused on immediate problems and concerns of people. Personal crises, lack of information, a specific occupational choice, and ineffective relationships with others are examples of the immediate problems and concerns to which school counselors are asked to respond. This focus for career guidance programs will continue, and new and more effective ways of helping children and young people with their problems and concerns will continue to emerge. To help counselors meet the challenges they may face in the future, however, this focus for career guidance is not sufficient. What is needed is a developmental focus. Based on this premise, a primary goal of career guidance is to assist all persons (children, young people, and adults) to become competent achieving individuals, to maximize their potential through the effective use or management of their own talents and their environment. As a result career guidance should focus on assisting all individuals in the development of self-knowledge and interpersonal skills, in obtaining life career planning competencies, in identifying and using placement resources, and in gaining knowledge and understanding of life roles, settings, and events, specifically those associated with family, education, work, and leisure. Individuals' feelings of control over their environment and their own destiny, and their relations with others and with institutions are of prime importance.

Conclusion

What began at the turn of the century with a selection and placement focus, and then shifted in the 1920s and 1930s to a focus on personal adjustment, has now assumed a developmental focus.

Societal conditions, interacting with our more complete knowledge of human growth and development in career terms, as well as the broader array of tools and techniques, have brought us to the realization that career development is a life-span phenomenon and that all individuals can benefit from participating in a comprehensive guidance program K-12 with career development firmly and identifiably imbedded within it.

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HIGHLIGHTS

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Career Guidance, Families and School Counselors

Recent national surveys indicate that career guidance is a major issue for American families. In Gallup polls, for example, parents report that helping their children choose a career is their second most pressing concern. For the general public, understanding the world of work and making realistic plans for after high school are the third and sixth most important goals of education.

Students themselves, according to more than 33,000 sampled in 1973 and 1983 by the American College Testing Program, have increased their involvement in career planning activities. Among the eighth and eleventh graders in the 1983 study, over 70 percent said they want even more help with making career plans. Other research shows that parents play a primary role in children's career development, and that school counseling programs can benefit from tapping into this resource (Birk & Blimline, 1984; Daniels, Karmos, & Presley, 1983; Noeth, Engen, & Noeth, 1984; Otto, 1984; Otto & Call, 1985; Prediger & Sawyer, 1985).

In short, career guidance has a top priority with parents, the general public and high school students. Continuing and further assistance appears to be needed, and a collaborative effort between schools and families could help meet the need. This digest briefly considers the following issues relevant to this effort: family determinants of children's career development, stages of children's career development, counselor guidelines for starting parent programs, and counselor interventions to utilize family influence.

Family Determinants of Children's Career Development

The major family determinants of children's career development can be categorized as follows: geographic location, genetic inheritance, family background, socioeconomic status, family composition, parenting style, and parental attitudes toward work (Splete & Freeman-George, 1985). These factors influence the formation of children's self-concept, values and personality, a shaping process in which the parents' role is the most crucial. These personal qualities, in turn, exert a primary influence on initial career and education choices. As children go through this choice-making process, they form educational aspirations on the basis of self-assessments and feedback from significant others. Aspirations influence achievement, and it is the level of educational achievement which is the single most important determinant of eventual occupational achievement (Otto, 1984).

Stages of Children's Career Development

In the early years of career development three basic stages occur: (1) awareness, up to age 11, when children believe they can do whatever they like and transform needs and desires into occupational preferences; (2) exploration, ages 11-17, when tentative choices are made on the basis of interest, abilities and values; and (3) preparation, age 17 to young adulthood, when actual choices are made that strike a balance between personal capabilities and such factors as educational and employment opportunities and job requirements (McDaniels & Hummel, 1984). Stereotypes and prejudices about the appropriateness of certain careers may need to be challenged throughout this process.

Counselor Guidelines for Starting Parent Programs

School counselors can start involving parents in career guidance by creating a parent resource library, distributing lists of practical suggestions, and calling a parent group meeting to get the program off the ground. Laramore (1984) offers some practical guidelines for insuring the success of the involvement program:

1. Find someone to run the program who knows about the subject and is a clear, enthusiastic speaker.
2. Advertise the program as the parents' role in their children's educational and career future. If only "career" is mentioned, parents who expect their children to go to college are unlikely to attend.
3. Don't be discouraged if only two parents come the first time. Pretend it's a roomful and give it your all. The second year, there will be 50 parents; the third, 150, and so on.
4. Elementary and middle school/junior high parents often don't realize that this is the time to begin. Therefore, in the publicity, use phrases like, "Now is the time to start your child on her/his successful future."

Counselor Interventions to Utilize Family Influence

Counselors can provide direct services to parents and children, both separately and together, as well as indirect services through classroom teachers, school and community committees, and a variety of activities. Useful examples include the following:

1. Conduct parent study groups. Counselors can help parents understand their role in children's career development, the general growth and development of their children, and the relationship between the career guidance program and the total school program. Specifically, parents need up-to-date, accurate information about the following: changing career choices and broadened options for males and females, educational opportunities, wage and salary statistics, the importance and stages of career

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planning, barriers to the career development process, career resources in the school and community, myths in sex-role stereotyping, sex equity laws, and ways to improve communication skills (Birk & Blimline, 1984).

2. Coordinate parent resources. Programs can be developed in which parents serve as mini-course instructors or resource persons in the classroom, teacher aides on field trips, members of advisory committees, technical advisors to counselors and teachers on developing simulated work settings, and members of curriculum development committees. Counselors can also assist parents to assume liaison roles between the school and the working community, especially in the parents' own places of employment (Navin & Sears, 1980).
3. Organize career activities for families. Career nights appear to be one of the most popular activities at the high school level, although some authorities in career development question the value of a single event in a process that occurs over a number of years. Additional suggestions include parent/student workshops to facilitate career discussions, self-directed career centers for use by both parents and children, and student/parent handbooks for personal educational and vocational planning (Castricone, Finan, & Gumble, 1982; Daniels, et al., 1983).
4. Conduct student sessions on family influence. For many students, as they begin to deal with issues of autonomy and independence, it is important to sort out family influences on their career development. Counselors can help in this process through a variety of techniques that are suitable for individual and group counseling or for coursework. These include: family systems review, paradigms of family interaction, family sculpting/choreography, family constellation diagrams, occupational family trees, and "advice, advice, and more advice"--an exploration of parental work values (Splete & Freeman-George, 1985).

Interventions involving parents can benefit the parents' own career development. Dissatisfied with their career choices or interested in changing direction, they can learn career planning skills which are useful for themselves (Amatea & Cross, 1980). In doing so, they may become better career counselors for their children, as well as provide a model for adaptability and flexibility in a rapidly changing work world.

Conclusion

Research has already demonstrated that comprehensive career guidance programs can provide students with basic economic understandings, skills in understanding themselves and educational/occupational opportunities, and skills in overcoming bias and stereotyping. Evidence is also promising that students can acquire increases in basic academic skills, a desire to work, career decision-making skills, and job-seeking/finding/getting/holding skills (Hoyt, 1984). Through collaborative efforts in career guidance, counselors can help parents influence their children's career development more effectively and wisely, and together they may all succeed in turning the promises of research into reality.

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CAREER PLANNING FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED YOUTH

Although parents and teachers may be concerned about academic planning for gifted and talented young people, they often assume that career planning will take care of itself. Students may have many choices available because of multiple gifts or a particular talent, and a career choice in that area seems inevitable. There is no need for career planning: The student is simply expected to make an occupational decision around the sophomore year of college and then follow through on the steps necessary to attain that goal.

Unfortunately, evidence is mounting that youthful brilliance in one or more areas does not always translate into adult satisfaction and accomplishment in working life. Studies with such diverse groups as National Merit Scholars (Watley, 1969), Presidential Scholars (Kaufmann, 1981), and graduates of gifted education programs (Kerr, 1985) have shown that the path from education to career is not always smooth, and it may be complicated by social-emotional problems and needs of gifted students that differ from those of more typical students.

Recognition of these problems has produced counseling models that address student needs (e.g., Berger, 1989; Buescher, 1987; Silverman, 1989; Van-Tassel-Baska, 1990). Some factors that can contribute to problems with career planning are presented here, along with ways of preventing and intervening with career development problems.

Multipotentiality

Multipotentiality is the ability to select and develop any number of career options because of a wide variety of interests, aptitudes, and abilities (Frederickson & Rothney, 1972). The broad range of opportunities available tends to increase the complexity of decision making and goal setting, and it may actually delay career selection. Multipotentiality is most commonly a concern of students with moderately high IQs (120–140), those who are academically talented, and those who have two or more outstanding but very different abilities such as violin virtuosity and mathematics precocity. Signs that multipotentiality is a concern include the following:

Elementary school: Despite excellent performance in many or all school subjects, students may have difficulty making decisions, particularly when they are asked to make a choice on topics or projects from among many options. Multiple hobbies with only brief periods of enthusiasm and difficulty in finishing up and following through on tasks (even those which are enjoyable) are additional signs for concern.

Junior high: Despite continued excellence in many or all school subjects, difficulty with decision making and follow-through continue. Students may participate in multiple social and recreational activities with no clear preferences, and they may overschedule, leaving few free periods and little time to just think.

Senior high: Decision-making problems generalize to academic and career decisions, resulting in overly packed class schedules and highly diverse participation in school activities. Students often accept leadership of a wide variety of groups in school, religious activities, and community organizations. Adults may notice occasional signs of stress and exhaustion (absences, frequent or chronic illness, periods of depression or anxiety, etc.), or they may see evidence of delay or vacillation about college planning and decision making. Students are able to maintain high grades in most or all courses taken. An important clue to continuing multipotentiality is the student's vocational interest test profiles. These tests often show interests and similarities to an unusually large number of occupations.

College: Multipotential students often have multiple academic majors. Three or more changes of college major are not unusual for an individual who cannot set long-term goals. They continue intense participation in extracurricular activities and have outstanding academic performance but are concerned about selecting a career. They may make hasty, arbitrary, or "going-along-with-the-crowd" career choices. They may encounter the dilemma of opportunities lost in giving up some interests in favor of others.

Adulthood: Some of the implications of multipotentiality can be seen in bright adults who, despite excellent performance in most jobs, hold multiple positions in short time periods and experience a general feeling of lack of fit in most jobs. Some experience feelings of alienation, purposelessness, depression, and apathy despite high performance and excellent evaluations. Some experience periods of unemployment and underemployment, or they fall behind same-age peers in career progress and sometimes social development (marriage, family, community involvement).

Possible intervention strategies for multipotentiality at different educational levels include the following:

Elementary School

- Provide realistic exposure to the world of work through parent sharing and exposure to parents' working places.
- Encourage career fantasies through dress-up and plays.
- Encourage focusing activities such as class projects or achievement of Scout merit badges, which require goal setting and follow-through.
- Use biographies of eminent people as primary career education material.
- As teachers or parents, carefully evaluate skills, talents, and interests in order to help children understand possible areas of greatest interest.

Junior High

- Discuss the meaning and value of work.
- Discuss family and community values pertaining to work.
- Provide for light volunteer work in several areas of interest.
- Provide "shadowing" experiences in which students spend the day with an adult working in an area of greatest interest.
- Discourage overinvolvement in social and recreational activities for the sake of involvement; prioritize and decide on a few extracurricular involvements.

Senior High

- Seek appropriate vocational testing from a guidance professional or psychologist.
- Encourage visits to college and university classes in a few areas of interest.
- Provide for more extensive volunteer work.
- Explore possibilities of paid internships with professionals.
- Insist on a solid curriculum of coursework in order to insure against inadequate preparation for a later career choice.
- Provide value-based guidance, which emphasizes choosing a career that fulfills deeply held values.
- Discourage conformist, stereotyped career choices.
- Expose students to atypical career models.

College Students and Young Adults

- Seek career counseling including assessment of interests, needs, and values.
- Enroll in a career planning class.
- Encourage careful course selection.
- Avoid conformist and stereotyped major choices.
- Seek a mentor.
- Engage in long-term goal setting and planning.

Early Emergence

Early emergers (Marshall, 1981) are children who have extremely focused career interests. A passion for an idea and an early commitment to a career area are common childhood characteristics of eminent individuals in a wide variety of professions (Bloom, 1985; Kerr, 1985); thus, early emergence should not be thought of as a problem of career development, but rather as an opportunity that may be acted upon, neglected, or, unfortunately, sometimes destroyed. Acting upon early emergence means noticing an unusually strong talent or enthusiasm, providing training in skills necessary to exercise that talent, providing resources, and keeping an open mind about the future of the talent or interest. Neglecting early emergence means overlooking the talent or interest or failing to provide education and resources. Destroying the early emerger's passion may not be easy, but belittling the talent or interest ("Who cares about someone who doodles and draws all the time instead of listening?" "What makes you think you can become an anthropologist?") may easily extinguish the flame. Insisting on well-roundedness or disallowing needed training (e.g., refusing to allow a mathematically precocious child to accelerate in math) may diminish the passion. Overly enthusiastic encouragement and pressure may also remove the intrinsic pleasure the child feels in the interest or talent area.

As with multipotentiality, there are signs of early emergence:

Elementary school: Avid interest in one school subject or activity with only general liking for other subjects and activities and extraordinary talent in one area and average or above average performance in others are underlying signs of early emergence. (These students may be mistakenly labeled as underachievers). Students may also try to write more papers than required, choose too many subjects in the area of interest, and mention early career fantasies about success and fame in a particular area of interest.

Junior high: Students continue highly focused interests and may express a strong desire for advanced training in an area of talent and interest. Development of adolescent social interests may be delayed because of a commitment to work in a talent area or because of rejection by others, yet performance in the talent area grows, while performance in other areas diminishes.

Senior high: Students may develop a strong identity in the talent area ("computer whiz," "artist," or "fix-it person," for example). They may express a desire for help with planning a career in an area of interest. A desire to test skill in competition with or in concert with peers in the chosen talent area and continued high performance in the talent area to a degree that causes neglect of other school subjects or social activities are additional signs of a focused interest and passion.

College students and young adults: These young people make an early, but not hasty or arbitrary, choice of career or major. They often show a desire for completion of a training period in order to "get on with work," seek out mentors, continue intense focus, and often neglect social and extracurricular activities.

Adulthood: Adults may continue their intense focus, desire eminence or excellence in the talent area, and possibly forego or delay other aspects of adult development such as marriage, nurturing of a younger generation, social and community involvement, and personal development.

Possible intervention strategies for early emergers at different educational levels include the following:

Elementary School

- Provide for early identification of unusual talent or area of precocity.
- Consult with experts on the nature and nurture of particular gifts or talents.
- Consult with the school on ways of nurturing the talent or gift.
- Encourage fantasies through reading of bibliographies and playing of work roles.
- Provide opportunities to learn about eminent people in the talent area (attend a concert; visit an inventor's workshop; attend a math professor's class).
- Relate necessary basic skills to the area of interest.
- Provide opportunities to socialize with children with similar, intense interests through such activities as music camps, computer camps, and Junior Great Books.
- Strike a careful balance between encouragement and laissez-faire; provide support for the interest along with freedom to change direction. Do not become so invested in the child's talent or interest that you fail to notice that the child has changed interests. (Early emergers most often change to a closely related interest; that is, they switch musical instruments or transfer an interest in mathematics to an interest in theoretical physics).

Junior High

- Provide support and encouragement during the intensive training that often begins at this point.
- Allow for plenty of time alone.
- Seek opportunities for job "shadowing" (following a professional throughout the working day) in area of interest.
- Seek opportunities for light volunteer work in area of interest.
- Avoid pressuring the student into social activities.

Senior High

- Continue support, encouragement, and time alone.
- Seek opportunities for internships and work experiences in the areas of interest (internship on archaeological dig; job as camp counselor at a fine arts camp; coaching younger people in musical or athletic skill).
- Seek career guidance from a guidance counselor *who is familiar with the talent area* or from a professional in that field.
- Make a detailed plan of training and education leading toward the chosen career goal, including financial arrangements.
- Explore higher education or postsecondary training early and thoroughly, with contacts and visits.
- Help the student establish a relationship with a mentor in the area of interest. Early emergers often fare better in a less prestigious institution where they have access to an enthusiastic mentor than in an Ivy League or high status institution where they do not.

College Students and Young Adults

- Help provide support for extended education and training.
- Encourage the development of knowledge of career ladders in the area of interest (auditions, gallery shows, inventor's conventions, etc.).
- Encourage a continuing relationship with a career-counseling or guidance professional for support in decision making and problem solving.

The career development problems discussed here are nearly opposite one another: The multipotential student seems unfocused, delaying, and indecisive, whereas the early emerger is focused, driven, and almost too decisive. Both types carry with them dangers and opportunities. Skillful career education and guidance can help ensure that neither multipotentiality nor early emergence leads to difficulty in career planning and development.

Career Planning for Special Populations

Minority Gifted Students

Minority gifted students have special career planning needs as well as needs related to multipotentiality or early emergence. Minority students from Black, Hispanic, and American Indian backgrounds are less likely to have been selected for gifted education programs and less likely to perform well on standardized achievement tests than their nonminority peers. In addition, they may have lower career aspirations because of lower societal expectations. Nevertheless, the patterns of leadership and out-of-class accomplishments of gifted minority students are very similar to those of nonminority gifted students (Kerr, Colangelo, Maxey, & Christensen, 1989). Minority gifted students are active leaders in other communities. Therefore, career counseling for these students may be most effective when it focuses on raising career aspirations and emphasizes out-of-class accomplishments as indicators of possible career directions. Career planning must also go hand in hand with building a strong ethnic identity if later conflict between ethnic identity and achievement in majority society is to be avoided. Colangelo and LaFrenz (1981) have provided suggestions for how this can be accomplished.

Gifted Girls and Women

Persisting sex role stereotypes and the continued socialization of girls for secondary roles means that, despite great gains in certain fields such as medicine and law, gifted girls are less likely than gifted boys to achieve their full potential. Although gifted girls outperform gifted boys in terms of grades, gifted boys achieve higher scores on college admissions examinations. Compared to gifted boys, gifted girls are underprepared academically, having taken fewer mathematics and science courses and less challenging courses in social studies. As a result, they have fewer options for college majors and career goals (Kerr, 1985). Bright women apparently let go of career aspirations gradually, first through underpreparation and later through decisions that may put the needs of husbands and families before their own. Gifted women fall behind gifted men in salary, status, and promotions throughout their working lives.

In order to ensure that gifted girls have the greatest possible chance to fulfill their potential, career planning should emphasize rigorous academic preparation, particularly in mathematics and science; maintaining high career aspirations; and identifying both internal and external barriers to the achievement of career goals. Many suggestions for career planning for gifted girls are provided in *Smart Girls, Gifted Women* (Kerr, 1985).

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The Case for Authentic Assessment

by Grant Wiggins, CLASS

Mr. Wiggins, a researcher and consultant on school reform issues, is a widely-known advocate of authentic assessment in education. This digest is based on materials that he prepared for the California Assessment Program.

What is Authentic Assessment?

Assessment is authentic when we directly examine student performance on worthy intellectual tasks. Traditional assessment, by contract, relies on indirect or proxy 'items'–efficient, simplistic substitutes from which we think valid inferences can be made about the student's performance at those valued challenges.

Do we want to evaluate student problem-posing and problem-solving in mathematics? Experimental research in science? Speaking, listening, and facilitating a discussion? doing document-based historical inquiry? thoroughly revising a piece of imaginative writing until it 'works' for the reader? Then let our assessment be built out of such exemplary intellectual challenges.

Further comparisons with traditional standardized tests will help to clarify what 'authenticity' means when considering assessment design and, use:

- Authentic assessments require students to be effective performers with acquired knowledge. Traditional tests tend to reveal only whether the student can recognize, recall or 'plug in' what was learned out of context. This may be as problematic as inferring driving or teaching ability from written tests alone. (Note, therefore, that the debate is not "either-or": there may well be virtue in an array of local and state assessment instruments as befits the purpose of the measurement).
- Authentic assessments present the student with the full array of tasks that mirror the priorities and challenges found in the best instructional activities: conducting research; writing, revising and discussing papers; providing an engaging oral analysis of a recent political event; collaborating with others on a debate, etc. Conventional tests are usually limited to paper-and-pencil, one-answer questions.
- Authentic assessments attend to whether the student can craft polished, thorough and justifiable answers, performances or products. Conventional tests typically only ask the student to select or write correct responses–irrespective of reasons. (There is rarely an adequate opportunity to plan, revise and substantiate responses on typical tests, even when there are open-ended questions). As a result,
- Authentic assessment achieves validity and reliability by emphasizing and standardizing the appropriate *criteria* for scoring such (varied) products; traditional testing standardizes objective 'items' and, hence, the (one) *right answer* for each.
- "Test validity" should depend in part upon whether the test simulates real-world 'tests' of ability. Validity on most multiple-choice tests is determined merely by matching items to the curriculum content (or through sophisticated correlations with other test results).
- Authentic tasks involve 'ill-structured' challenges and roles that help students rehearse for the complex ambiguities of the 'game' of adult and professional life. Traditional tests are more like drills, assessing static and too-often arbitrarily discrete or simplistic elements of those activities.

Beyond these technical considerations the move to reform assessment is based upon the premise that assessment should primarily support the needs of learners. Thus, secretive tests composed of proxy items; and scores that have no obvious meaning or usefulness undermine teachers' ability to improve instruction and students' ability to improve their performance. We rehearse for and teach to authentic tests–think of music and military training–without compromising validity.

The best tests always teach students and teachers alike the kind of work that most matters; they are enabling and forward-looking, not just reflective of prior teaching. In many colleges and all professional settings the essential challenges are known in advance–the upcoming report, recital, Board presentation, legal case, book to write, etc. Traditional tests, by requiring complete secrecy for their validity, make it difficult for teachers and students to rehearse and gain the confidence that come from knowing their performance obligations. (A known challenge also makes it possible to hold all students to higher standards).

Why do we need to invest in these labor-intensive forms of assessment?

While multiple-choice tests can be valid indicators or predictors of academic performance, too often our tests mislead students and teachers about the kinds of work that should be mastered. Norms are not standards; items are not real problems; right answers are not rationales.

What most defenders of traditional tests fail to see is that it is the *form*, not the content of the test that is harmful to learning; demonstrations of the technical validity of standardized tests should not be the issue in the assessment reform debate. Students come to believe that learning is cramming; teachers come to believe that tests are after-the-fact, imposed nuisances composed of contrived questions–irrelevant to their intent and success. Both parties are led to believe that right answers matter more than habits of mind and the justification of one's approach and results.

A move toward more authentic tasks and outcomes thus improves teaching and learning: students have greater clarity about their obligations (and are asked to master more engaging tasks), and teachers can come to believe that assessment results are both meaningful and useful for improving instruction.

If our aim is merely to monitor performance than conventional testing is probably adequate. If our aim is to improve performance across the board than the tests must be composed of exemplary tasks, criteria and standards.

Won't authentic assessment be too expensive and time-consuming?

The costs are deceptive: while the scoring of judgment-based tasks seems expensive when compared to multiple-choice tests (about $2 per student vs. 1 cent) the gains to teacher professional development, local assessing, and student learning are many. As states like California and New York have found (with their writing and hands-on science tests) significant improvements occur locally in the teaching and assessing of writing and science when teachers become involved and invested in the scoring process.

If costs prove prohibitive, sampling may well be the appropriate response–the strategy employed in California, Vermont and Connecticut in their new performance and portfolio assessment projects. Whether through a sampling of many writing genres, where each student gets one prompt only; or through sampling a small number of all student papers and school-wide portfolios; or through assessing only a small sample of students, valuable information is gained at a minimum cost.

And what have we gained by failing to adequately assess all the capacities and outcomes we profess to value simply because it is time-consuming, expensive, or labor-intensive? Most other countries routinely ask students to respond orally and in writing on their major tests–the same countries that outperform us on international comparisons. Money, time and training are routinely set aside to insure that assessment is of high quality. They also correctly assume that high standards depend on the quality of day-to-day local assessment–further offsetting the apparent high cost of training teachers to score student work in regional or national assessments.

Will the public have any faith in the objectivity and reliability of judgment-based scores?

We forget that numerous state and national testing programs with a high degree of credibility and integrity have for many years operated using human judges:

- the New York Regents exams, parts of which have included essay questions since their inception–and which are scored locally (while audited by the state);
- the Advanced Placement program which uses open-ended questions and tasks, including not only essays on most tests but the performance-based tests in the Art Portfolio and Foreign Language exams;
- state-wide writing assessments in two dozen states where model papers, training of readers, papers read 'blind' and procedures to prevent bias and drift gain adequate reliability;
- the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the Congressionally-mandated assessment, uses numerous open-ended test questions and writing prompts (and successfully piloted a hands-on test of science performance)
- newly-mandated performance-based and portfolio-based state-wide testing in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Kentucky, Maryland, and New York.

Though the scoring of standardized tests is not subject to significant error, the procedure by which items are *chosen*, and the manner in which norms or cut-scores are established is often quite subjective–and typically immune from public scrutiny and oversight.

Genuine accountability does not avoid human judgment. We monitor and improve judgment through training sessions, model performances used as exemplars, audit and oversight policies as well as through such basic procedures as having disinterested judges review student work 'blind' to the name or experience of the student–as occurs routinely throughout the professional, athletic and artistic worlds in the judging of performance.

Authentic assessment also has the advantage of providing parents and community members with directly observable products and understandable evidence concerning their students' performance; the quality of student work is more discernible to laypersons than when we must rely on translations of talk about stanines and renorming.

Ultimately, as the researcher Lauren Resnick has put it, What you assess is what you get; if you don't test it you won't get it. To improve student performance we must recognize that essential intellectual abilities are falling through the cracks of conventional testing.

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The Challenge of Counseling in Middle Schools

Edwin R. Gerler, Jr.

Introduction

Counselors in middle schools work with young people whose lives are in constant flux. Early adolescence is a time of physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development, during which young people confront the question, "Who am I?" The young adolescent's search for identity involves many challenges (Gerler, Hogan, & O'Rourke, 1990).

This digest deals with how counselors in middle schools can help youngsters face the various challenges of early adolescence. Counselors are called upon to plan programs that make middle schools inviting places for young people to learn and grow.

There are major differences between middle schools and high schools, differences that cause some students to get lost emotionally and to fail academically. Middle school counseling programs need to focus on preparing youngsters for the increased independence of life in high school that is typically accompanied by more social pressures and by increased stress.

The Challenge of Understanding Self

Early adolescence is difficult for most youngsters, a time for challenging one's self and the ideas brought from childhood. It is the beginning of physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth which brings excitement, delight, anxiety, and misunderstanding. The child, who in elementary school was obedient and academically motivated, may seem disrespectful and lazy in middle school. Early adolescence begins the transition from acceptance of adult direction to challenging authority and moving toward self direction. The goal of middle school counselors is to provide a blend of challenge and support that will promote identity development in early adolescence.

Middle school students need the guidance and direction of effective counselors to begin the major developmental task of adolescence which is to achieve a clear sense of self (Marcia, 1980). The confusion that reigns in early adolescence creates a challenging climate for the young person and for those trying to help the youngster manage the difficulties associated with leaving childhood for a new stage of life. Counselors implement various practical strategies to help middle school students move toward self understanding. These strategies include such activities as maintaining daily journals, group counseling, and developmental classroom programs that offer young people opportunities for self exploration.

The Challenges of Family Relationships

As young people begin to seek their own identities, they face the challenge of leaving behind much of their early dependence on home and family. Parents and family members, however, should continue to provide structure and support during the difficult moments adolescents face in growing away from complete dependence on home. The so-called traditional family, however, has virtually disappeared in America. Divorce, single-parent homes, and step-families are a fact of life confronting youngsters. In the climate of changing families, middle school counselors need to be prepared to help youngsters and their parents understand one another and to work together in making the difficult choices that occur during adolescence. Middle school counselors need to be especially aware of dysfunctional aspects of students' families in order to develop counseling strategies and guidance programs that help young adolescents find themselves (Wegscheider, 1981). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, counselors need to be aware of cultural differences that students bring from their homes into middle school life and into the search for personal identities.

The Challenges of Peer Pressure and Drug Abuse

Early adolescence is a time of experimentation with new behaviors and of reliance on peers for guidance and direction. This combination can have devastating effects on young people's lives if it results in experimentation with alcohol and other drugs. Young people who begin to use alcohol and other mind altering substances during their middle school years may be especially prone to the problem of addiction later in adolescence and into adulthood (Welte & Barnes, 1985).

Most middle schools are not prepared to offer adequate prevention programs to help youngsters challenge the social pressure to experiment with drugs. In fact, the current status of drug education in schools throughout the United States is ambiguous at best. Theory-based prevention programs that have been tested offer hope that drug abuse prevention programs will improve. Assertiveness training programs, for example, that are designed to help adolescents resist peer pressure, seem to offer middle school counselors intriguing ideas for program development. In addition, cognitive-development programs that are intended to raise the psychological maturity of youngsters and improve their decision-making offer considerable hope for middle school counseling programs.

Middle school counselors must understand the relationship between peer pressure and substance abuse and develop counseling strategies that are designed to help young adolescents deal with the pressures to use drugs.

The Challenges of Stressful Lives

Students in middle schools frequently complain about the stress they experience in their everyday lives (Elkind, 1990). Typical adolescent complaints include "Everyone is watching for me to make mistakes" and "I never have any time for myself." Adults sometimes have a tendency to discount what adolescents say, believing that most of the stress youngsters experience will pass as maturation occurs. This lack of empathy on the part of adults may leave adolescents feeling misunderstood and alienated.

Middle school counselors must implement programs that help young adolescents deal with many stressful circumstances. Desensitization programs that help in overcoming undue fears and relaxation programs that attempt to relieve stress may help young adolescents develop confidence and hope for the future.

The Challenge of Sexual Maturation

Physical maturation, and particularly sexual maturation, has significant effects on self-concept and social relationships during the middle school years. Most young adolescents dwell on how to make themselves more attractive and acceptable to their peers. One of the many difficult challenges for middle school counselors is to attend to the concerns of adolescents about physical maturation and sexuality.

Much has been written about adolescent sexuality, in particular, about topics such as friendship, sexual identity, and adolescent pregnancy. Middle school counselors must implement programs that take into account the impact of physical and sexual maturation on students' lives. Counselors should especially work to prepare adolescents to meet the challenging issues surrounding contraception and teen pregnancy (Smith, Nenney, & McGill, 1986).

The Challenge of Academics

Americans are becoming increasingly aware of the need for schools to promote academic excellence. Individuals in the business community and elsewhere complain that young people do not have the basic academic skills necessary for economic success in a competitive world. Governmental and private commissions have noted the high dropout rate in America's schools and the generally poor record of public schools in promoting academic excellence. Educators in the United States must account for the failure of schools to motivate young people to stay in school and to strive for high levels of academic achievement.

Middle school counselors can contribute to schools' efforts at improving academic achievement among young teenagers (Gerler, Drew, & Mohr, 1990). These days middle schoolers often have considerable freedom. Many are latchkey children who may choose what to do when they arrive home from a day at school. More often than not they choose leisure, neglecting their academic responsibilities. Middle school counselors should collaborate with teachers to implement programs that help youngsters develop a reasonable "work ethic."

Middle school counselors can play an important role in helping young people see themselves as capable students who have the potential to realize academic success. Counselors should take the lead in transforming low achieving and disruptive adolescents into model students.

The Challenge of Career Exploration

In the search for identity, young adolescents struggle not only with the question of "Who am I?" but also with the question "Who will I become?" The latter question is often answered in terms of future occupation. Adolescents face an ever-changing world of work, a fact that is often neglected by overburdened middle school counselors. The economic, political, and social changes that have brought women and minorities into the work force in large numbers have altered how youngsters must be prepared to enter the world of work (Hoyt & Shylo, 1987). Middle school counselors have many opportunities to promote career development and career exploration among young people.

It is especially important for young adolescents to learn the skills that will eventually help them achieve gainful employment. These skills include how to write a resume, how to fill out a job application, and how to interview effectively for a job. Middle school counselors must be especially attentive to the special needs of exceptional students in the area of career exploration.

The Challenge of Organizing a Counseling Program in Middle Schools

The challenge for middle school counselors is to develop focused programs that meet specific developmental needs of young adolescents. Much like the students they serve, middle school counselors must develop their own professional identities which are expressed in well defined and accountable school guidance programs. Middle school counselors cannot do everything. They are faced with issues such as dysfunctional families, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, teen suicide, sexual abuse, school dropouts, and numerous other difficult matters. Counselors, therefore, must set priorities and develop programs to meet those priorities. Preventive and developmental programs seem to be the most promising and cost-effective approaches to counseling with young adolescents in middle schools. Such programs are likely to help young adolescents satisfactorily address the question, "Who am I?"

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The Challenge of Diversity: Involvement or Alienation in the Academy?

Daryl G. Smith, Claremont Graduate School

For years, researchers have forecast the increasing diversification of students in higher education as a result of changing demographics and a variety of other social and economic shifts. The diverse elements of today's student body include age, gender, ethnic and racial backgrounds, and increasing numbers of differently abled and part-time students. Despite the difficulties inherent in generalizing across such disparate groups and individuals, the issues higher education faces fundamentally relate to the capacity of institutions to function in a pluralistic environment. While it is unrealistic to assume that higher education will solve all these challenges independent of the rest of society, it is clear that the successful involvement of diverse populations has significant implications for education and for the nation.

What Is the Current Status of Enrollments, Graduation Rates, and the Campus Climate?

Although the makeup of today's student bodies is more diverse than 20 years ago, current enrollments suggest that this trend has reversed itself for some groups. Moreover, many students are clustered not only in segments of the postsecondary system but also in various levels and fields. Several recent national reports have sounded an alarm that the progress with respect to enrollments is not sufficient. Observers generally agree that retention overall and the retention rate for certain specific populations are critical problems for many institutions, even though surprisingly little is known about retention for most minority populations and for other nontraditional groups. One of the more troubling themes to emerge is that many campuses do not effectively involve students who are different. Students must confront stereotypic attitudes, unfamiliar values, ineffective teaching methods, and an organizational approach that may not support their efforts to succeed. While such concerns are prominent in the experience of minority students, issues of stereotyping, social isolation, and alienation are found in each of the literatures on women, disabled students, and adult learners as well. Indeed, in contemporary higher education, the condition of diversity is all too often a condition of alienation.

What Are the Patterns in Institutions Labeled Successful?

Five major themes emerge from a variety of studies looking at successful institutions. These institutions:

1. Focus on students' success and provide the tools for success;
2. Have begun to develop programs for increased coordination with elementary and secondary grades and for enhanced articulation between community colleges and four-year colleges and universities;
3. Dedicate energy and resources to creating an accepting environment that nourishes and encourages success;
4. Have access to good information that focuses on the institution and students,
5. Include leaders in the faculty and administration who provide strong direction for these efforts.

In addition to the insights that can be developed from successful institutions, lessons can be learned from women's colleges and from historically black institutions. Central to their success is the presence of many African-American and female faculty and administrators.

What Are the Fundamental Issues of Organizing for Diversity?

The basic conceptual framework for many of the more traditional responses to diversity has focused essentially on *student assistance*. These approaches address the particular needs or "problems" felt to be barriers to students' success. Many institutions have broadened these efforts to include *institutional accommodations*, which acknowledges that some of the barriers to success rest with the institution itself. While these accommodations are steps in the right direction, they are not sufficient in themselves. They should be viewed as part of a broader effort included in the capacity of institutions to *organize for diversity*. At the core of this effort will be an organization's ability to educate in a pluralistic society for a pluralistic world. To reach such a place requires a shift not only in thinking but also in framing the questions we ask. The challenges of such fundamental transformation mean grappling with a number of complex issues:

- *Diversity of faculty and staff.* Diverse perspectives are required to develop organizations sensitive to pluralism.
- *Mission and values.* The issue of values emerges at a number of levels. Perhaps the most challenging has to do with the ways in which students perceive that the values and perspectives they bring are not appreciated and may even put them in conflict with the institution's norms and behaviors.
- *Educating for diversity.* The content of the curriculum, styles of teaching, and modes of assessment are three elements in this effort.
- *Dealing with conflict.* The conditions for conflict are present on many campuses. Indeed, conflict may be an essential part of the process institutions will experience to clarify the many complex issues involved in creating pluralistic communities. Conflict may be part of the institutional learning process.
- *The quality of interaction.* A growing body of research evidence reflects the importance of students' involvement with the institution and peers and between students and faculty.
- *The perceived conflict between quality and diversity.* The continuing message that a fundamental conflict exists between diversity and quality is perhaps the most compelling argument for reshaping the questions and the discourse about this topic. We *can* broaden our understanding about quality without diluting expectations for learning or for the curriculum, but to do so will require reframing our understanding about the meaning of quality, the definition of standards, performance criteria, and assessment.

What Are the Implications of the Challenge of Diversity?

The challenge of diversity is national in scope. Given the complexities involved, no recipes are available to create truly pluralistic organizations. Institutions and policy makers can take some steps, however, to facilitate the process of adequately responding to diversity.

1. A comprehensive institutional assessment can provide important data from which priorities can be identified.
2. Cross-institutional research can identify successful institutions, identify ways in which involvement can be promoted, and clarify often conflicting material in the literature.
3. Coordination among the educational sectors can improve articulation and movement between levels and types of institutions.
4. Developing programs and funds can increase the number of students who enter teaching at all levels.
5. Organizations that succeed in meeting this challenge can also play a significant role in educating all future teachers and citizens to function in a diverse culture.
6. Providing increased local, state, and national financial aid will make access more possible for virtually every population of students.
7. Sustained commitment and effort rather than episodic interest will be required.
8. Leadership plays a central role, not only in setting goals and providing resources but also in framing the questions and setting the tone for deliberations.

If a single lesson is to be learned from the literature on diversity, it is that we cannot simply "add and stir." The challenges are many, but it is clear that the process of meeting them will bring great benefits to all members of the community and to the institution itself. The resources of diversity within an organization are more likely to prepare it for the future than any other resource.

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ERIC DIGEST

January 31, 1991

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The Changing World of the Elementary School Counselor

Edwin R. Gerler, Jr.

Introduction

Elementary school counselors face changing demands as education and society move rapidly toward a new century (Gerler, Ciechalski, & Parker, 1990). Counselors must set clear priorities in the face of changing expectations. This digest summarizes various educational and societal demands that confront elementary counselors and suggests possible roles counselors may select relative to these demands.

A Culturally Diverse World

Our society faces challenges in accepting and benefitting from cultural diversity. Problems emanating from racism exist despite efforts aimed at educational reform. Elementary school counselors must be aware of transmitting their own cultural values to children and of drawing erroneous conclusions about children's emotional and social well-being based on cultural differences. Moreover, because counseling theories and techniques are not always applicable across cultures, counselors must often look to new and creative ways to work effectively in multicultural settings (Pedersen, 1988). Elementary school counselors should advocate for educational programs that include counselors, teachers, parents, and students working together for increased cultural understanding through role playing and other awareness activities.

A World of Changing Families

The so-called traditional family has virtually disappeared in America. Divorce and single-parent homes are a fact of life confronting children. Elementary school counselors must understand the effects of changing family structures and find ways to promote child growth and development within the context of family change. These ways will include divorce groups, training groups for single parents, guidance for latchkey children, and a variety of other important strategies. Elementary school counselors need to develop innovative approaches to help children and parents develop in a healthy fashion in spite of the ambiguity created by divorce and single-parent families. Counselors should assume a proactive stance by collaborating with teachers in developing and implementing family education programs.

A World of Drug Abuse

Students often begin to experiment with drugs in elementary school and early experimentation frequently leads to abuse and addiction in adolescence. Moreover, educators are aware of problems coming from families made dysfunctional by alcoholism and drug addiction. Elementary school counselors must understand the scope and implications of substance abuse and implement drug education programs that are designed to prevent drug abuse and to help children overcome the effects of substance abuse in their families. Elementary school counselors also need to recognize the serious effects of parents' alcoholism on children's development and implement compassionate approaches to helping these young victims receive help whether or not their parents are willing to accept help.

A World of Child Abuse and Neglect

Child abuse and neglect are rampant in our society. Elementary school counselors can build a positive school environment for youngsters who suffer from abuse and neglect by implementing such programs as parent support groups to prevent physical abuse of children, programs that help identify potential child abusers, and preventive sexual abuse programs. Elementary school counselors cannot work alone in preventing and treating child abuse. They need to develop close working relationships with social services and other community agencies that frequently advocate for victims of abuse and neglect. Counselors also need to work closely with teachers to help them thoroughly understand signs of abuse and to acquaint them with correct referral procedures. The elementary school classroom may be the most stable setting neglected and abused children experience and may provide the empathy and positive regard needed to help children cope with their ordeal. Elementary school counselors must, therefore, become increasingly sensitive to the victims of abuse and to the need for effective counseling programs in this troublesome area.

A World of Exceptional Children

Many children in our schools are labeled exceptional and find it difficult to accept that they are "simply human." These children need to feel accepted and to use their exceptional characteristics in extraordinary ways. Children who are not so labeled need to learn ways of benefitting from those who are exceptional. The parents and teachers of exceptional children also need to find ways to understand and assist these youngsters. Elementary school counselors should work to build a supportive learning environment for exceptional children. There is a need for strong ties between counseling and special education. Counselors should develop programs for parents of exceptional children. Parents of gifted youngsters, for example, have unique needs resulting from misunderstandings created by myths, stereotypes, and the small number of gifted children in the population. Counselors should also develop strategies to help teachers work more effectively with parents of handicapped children because the teacher is in a position to develop an active, ongoing relationship with parents but may lack the training to provide effective counseling support.

A Technological World

Technological advances have changed education, work, and leisure in our society. Although most people experience the benefits of these advances, most also know the anxiety and frustration that accompany rapid technological change as well as the alienation generated by impersonal aspects of technology. Elementary school counselors need to help children develop emotionally and socially in the context of rapid technological change. Counselors often need to deal first with their own concerns about technology before helping children understand the benefits and limitations of technology. Elementary school counselors especially need to acquire competencies with computers, to overcome anxieties about using the technology, and to integrate computer technology into counseling programs (Bleuer & Walz, 1983).

A Changing World of Work

Elementary school counselors face major challenges as they work with parents and teachers to introduce children to an ever-changing world of work (Hoyt & Shylo, 1987). The emphasis on career education, however, seems to have diminished from its peak in the 1970s when the United States Office of Education demanded high visibility for career education programs in schools. This decline in career education at the elementary school level is unfortunate because economic, political, and social changes have brought women and minorities into the work force in large numbers and have altered how children must be prepared to enter the world of work. Elementary school counselors need to enhance children's career awareness, prevent sex-role stereotyping through career exploration programs, and use role models to expand children's occupational aspirations.

Promoting Learning in a Changing World

American society has placed increasing emphasis on the need for children to learn basic academic skills. Parents throughout the country complain that children are not learning to read, write, and perform basic mathematics. Governmental and private commissions have studied the poor academic achievement of children and are asking educators to account for the failure of our schools in this important area. If elementary school counselors are to fulfill their mission in schools, they must collaborate with teachers, parents, and school administrators in an effort to improve children's achievement. Elementary school counselors can positively effect children's achievement (Costar, 1980; West, Sonstegard, Hagerman, 1980). Counselors, for example, can implement and evaluate a ten-session program called "Succeeding in School" (Gerler, 1990). Counselors can also consult with parents on matters related to children's academic progress, implement classroom programs that improve the work habits of children who procrastinate with school work, and use group counseling as a means of motivating children to attend school.

Shaping Children's Behavior in a Changing World

Children's behavior, both in and out of school, is an important concern of parents and educators. The popular media has documented seemingly wide-spread school absenteeism and delinquency among our nation's youth. How to change children's misbehavior and to foster productive behavior are concerns of elementary school counselors. The techniques available to parents, teachers, and elementary school counselors for managing children's behavior are numerous and include modeling, positive reinforcement, behavior contracting, and desensitization. These behavioral change procedures have been thoroughly tested. Although the application of these methods is often difficult, the collaborative efforts of elementary school counselors, teachers, and parents in applying behavioral techniques eases some of the difficulties and increases the chances of success.

Counseling interventions to improve behavior include classroom guidance sessions, small group counseling sessions, and consultation with teachers. Students who receive a combination of these treatment procedures are likely to behave well in the classroom and elsewhere.

Human Relations in a Changing World

Children need to support each other in a world filled with conflict. They must learn and practice the interpersonal skills necessary for their present lives and also for the demands of peer pressure in adolescence. Elementary school counselors must find ways both to challenge and support youngsters in the area of human relations. Counselors can build positive relationships among children and between children and adults through affective education programs in the classroom and through innovative approaches to peer counseling. Elementary school counselors play a major part in developing and maintaining a healthy social climate for children. This aspect of counselors' work is important in part because children's relations with teachers, peers, and family affect learning and achievement. In addition, counselors who strive to improve children's interpersonal skills are helping to ensure that the 1990s and beyond will be years in which society will move forward on the basis of cooperative efforts among the nation's citizens. Finally, the work of elementary school counselors in this area will likely help to produce citizens who strive for productive relations across cultures and nations.

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ERIC Digest

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Child Sexual Abuse: What It Is and How to Prevent It

Sexual abuse of children is a grim fact of life in our society. It is more common than most people realize. Some surveys say that at least 1 out of 5 women and 1 out of 10 men recall sexual abuse in childhood.

Parents need not feel helpless about the problem. The American Academy of Pediatrics provides the following information to help prevent child sexual abuse.

What is child sexual abuse?

It is any sexual act with a child that is performed by an adult or an older child. Such acts include fondling the child's genitals, getting the child to fondle an adult's genitals, mouth to genital contact, rubbing an adult's genitals on the child, or actually penetrating the child's vagina or anus.

Other, often overlooked, forms of abuse occur. These include an adult showing his or her genitals to a child, showing the child obscene pictures or videotapes, or using the child to make obscene materials.

Could my child be sexually abused? By whom?

Boys and girls are most often abused by adults or older children whom they know and who can control them. The offender is known by the victim in 8 out of 10 reported cases. The offender is often an authority figure whom the child trusts or loves. Almost always the child is convinced to engage in sex by means of persuasion, bribes or threats.

How would I know if my child is being sexually abused?

You hope that if your child is abused, the child will tell you or someone else about the abuse. Yet, children who are being abused often have been convinced by the abuser that they must not tell anyone about it. A child's first statements about abuse may be sketchy and incomplete. He may only hint about the problem. Some abused children may tell friends about the abuse. A child who is told about or sees abuse in another child may tell an adult.

Parents need to be aware of behavioral changes that may signal this problem. The following symptoms may suggest sexual abuse:

- striking, exceptional fear of a person or certain places,
- an uncalled-for response from a child when the child is asked if he has been touched by someone,
- unreasonable fear of a physical exam,
- drawings that are scary or use a lot of black and red,
- abrupt change in conduct of any sort,
- sudden awareness of genitals and sexual acts and words, and
- attempts to get other children to perform sexual acts.

Physical signs of abuse include sexually transmitted diseases, such as gonorrhea or herpes. In an exam, a doctor may notice genital or anal changes indicative of abuse.

If my child reveals sexual abuse, what should I do?

Above all, take it seriously, but stay calm. Many children who report abuse are not believed. When a child's plea is ignored, she may not risk telling again. As a result, the child could be victimized for months or years. Millions of children have had their lives torn apart by ongoing sexual abuse.

Make sure you help your child understand that the abuse is not his or her fault. Give lots of love and comfort. If you are angry, don't let your child see it—you do not want the child to think the anger is aimed at her. Let the child know how brave she was to tell you. This is most important if the child has been abused by a close relative or a family friend. Then, tell someone yourself. Get help. Talk to your child's doctor, a counselor, a policeman, a child protective service worker, or a teacher.

Can I deal with sexual abuse in my family without contacting the authorities?

It is difficult for parents to stop sexual abuse without help from experts. The hard but healthy way to deal with the problem is:

1. Face the issue.
2. Take charge of the situation.
3. Work to avoid future abuse.
4. Discuss it with your pediatrician, who can provide support and counseling.
5. Report abuse to your local child protection service agency and ask about crisis support help.

Talking about sexual abuse can be very hard for the child who has been told not to tell by a trusted adult. It can be just as hard for adults if the abuser is close to them. Still, the abuse should be reported to your local child protection agency or your doctor. It is the best thing to do for both the child and the family.

What will happen to the child and the offender if sexual abuse is reported?

Cases are checked by the police or a social service agency that looks into reports of suspected child abuse. With the help of a doctor, the police or social service will decide whether sexual abuse has taken place. Sometimes, the police will let social services handle the case. This may occur if the child is not physically abused and the abuser is a family member. When a child is abused by a non-family member, the matter is usually handled by the police.

After the case is reported, what happens depends on the circumstances. The degree of risk of additional abuse to the child is of first concern to the authorities. The offender or the entire family may be required to attend a treatment program. In some cases, the offender may face criminal charges. If the child's safety is in question, he may be removed from the home. In any event, the child and family will need a great deal of support from relatives and friends.

What can parents do to prevent sexual abuse?

Stay alert to sexual abuse and teach your children what it is. Tell them they can and should say *No!* or *Stop!* to adults who threaten them sexually. Make sure your children know that it's OK to tell you about any attempt to molest them—no matter who the offender is.

The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages you to take the following steps:

- See if your child's school has an abuse prevention program for teachers and children. If it doesn't, get one started.
- Talk to your child about sexual abuse. A good time to do this is when your child's school is sponsoring a sexual abuse program.
- Teach your child about the privacy of body parts.
- Listen when your child tries to tell you something, especially when it seems hard for her to talk about it.
- Give your child enough of your time so that the child will not seek attention from other adults.
- Know with whom your child is spending time. Be careful about letting your child spend time in out-of-the-way places with other adults or older children. Plan to visit your child's caregiver without notice.
- Tell someone in authority if you suspect that your child or someone else's child is being abused.

Prevention measures to safeguard your children should begin early, since a number of child abuse cases involve preschoolers. The following guidelines offer age-appropriate topics to discuss with your children:

- 18 months—Teach your child the proper names for body parts.
- 3-5 years—Teach your child about private parts of the body and how to say *no* to sexual advances. Give straightforward answers about sex.
- 5-8 years—Discuss safety away from home and the difference between *good touch* and *bad touch*. Encourage your child to talk about scary experiences.
- 8-12 years—Stress personal safety. Start to discuss rules of sexual conduct that are accepted by the family.
- 13-18 years—Stress personal safety. Discuss rape, date rape, sexually transmitted diseases, and unintended pregnancy.

Your child's teacher, school counselor, or pediatrician can help you teach your child to avoid sexual abuse. They know how this can be done without making your child unduly upset or fearful. For further information on child sexual abuse and other forms of abuse, write to the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, P.O. Box 2866, Chicago, IL 60690.

Your pediatrician understands the importance of communication between parents and children. Your doctor is trained to detect the signs of child sexual abuse. Ask your pediatrician for advice on ways to protect your children.

This ERIC digest was adapted from the flyer *Child Sexual Abuse: What It Is and How to Prevent It*, copyright c 1988 American Academy of Pediatrics.

For more information:

Heath, Kathleen C., and Donald W. Irvine. *What Educators Need to Know about Child Abuse*. 1988. ERIC Document number 303 728.

National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect. *Study Findings: Study of National Incidence and Prevalence of Child Abuse and Neglect*. Washington, DC, 1988. ERIC Document number 310 613.

Or contact the Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect and Family Violence, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, DC 20013. Phone: 703-821-2086.

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ERIC DIGEST

MIGRANT EDUCATION

EDO-RC-88-11

CLASSROOM STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING MIGRANT CHILDREN ABOUT CHILD ABUSE

The migrant educator has always been much more than a teacher of the 3 R's. Divorce, teen pregnancy, and child abuse may have to be addressed in their daily lessons. They have attempted to overcome the effects of the migrant child's poverty, frequent moves, poor living conditions, and health problems through innovative programs that go beyond those regular classroom. Research conducted by ESCAPE (Eastern Stream Child Abuse Prevention and Education) from 1982-85 clearly identified migrant children as a population at high risk of being maltreated, adding yet another area of concern. Teachers need to find ways to incorporate education for recognizing and dealing with such problems into the curriculum in order to meet children's needs and still fulfill curriculum requirements. This digest will provide teachers with strategies and techniques for accomplishing this task.

Why should we teach about child abuse?

Bringing child abuse education into the migrant classroom can accomplish five major goals. It can:

- Provide support to the child who has suffered some form of maltreatment in order to lessen its devastating effects.
- Teach children prevention strategies that will help them wherever their migrant lifestyle takes them.
- Teach all children to accept those who have special problems.
- Improve the self-concepts of all children in your class.
- Encourage the maltreated child to confide in an adult regarding the maltreatment.

How should I choose materials for classroom use?

We are all aware of how sensitive the problem of abuse and neglect can be. It is important that you evaluate materials carefully, with attention paid to the specific objective at hand and the special population you are trying to reach, before you use them with children, parents, and staff. Consider these points:

- What is my goal?
- What strategies should I use to reach that goal?
- Is this material appropriate for the intended audience? (Consider reading level, interest level, ethnic and cultural concerns, age)
- Will this material encourage discussion?
- Know what procedures to follow if use of the material results in disclosure of maltreatment.

What can reading about child abuse accomplish?

For the child who is, or has been in an abusive situation, reading about others who have endured a similar experience can help a child deal with his own thoughts and emotions. Other children in the class who may have heard or read of a case of maltreatment will be curious or even uneasy around the abused child, but through literature your students can gain some understanding of and empathy for abused children which may help them respond more positively to their classmate. Keep in mind that the child who is unable to read a particular book can be read to or can listen to the book on tape.

What is Bibliotherapy?

Bibliotherapy is the process of offering guidance through reading; i.e., helping students find books through which they can explore a personal problem, develop life skills, improve self-concepts, and enhance personal growth. Through bibliotherapy a child can release pent-up emotions and confront the pain. For the maltreated child, realizing that others have suffered in much the same way will reduce feelings of isolation and shame. Bibliotherapy can be used to help children cope with existing problems or as a preventative measure to address problems common to all children at various stages of their development. The main qualifications for using books to help children are an interest in and a concern for children supported by a willingness to become familiar with children's literature.

How is Bibliotherapy implemented?

The following specific steps will ensure that use of bibliotherapy will be successful:

Preparation

- Identify student needs--at what level does the student need to be read to, should a certain topic be addressed.
- Match student needs to appropriate materials. Books are available for all ages, all reading levels and interest levels. Consult The Bookfinder, A Guide to Children's Literature About the Needs and Problems of Youth for books that relate to special topics, reading levels, and interest levels.
- There are special series of books for the older reader with limited skills, such as the Skinny Books by E.P. Dutton and Scholastic's Action Series.
- Decide how the book will be used, the guidance to be given during reading, and any follow-up activities.

Implementation

- Motivate students with activities that create a positive atmostphere.
- Provide opportunities for the child to experience the book--write about it, talk about it.
- Follow-up with creative discussion.
- Evaluate what has been learned and begin follow-up activities.

Creative Book Sharing Ideas With Groups

Often a group of children will choose or need to read a book on the same topic. This offers a great opportunity for a shared learning experience. Give the students several titles to choose from, but they must decide on one book that is going to be read by the whole group. Discuss what the book may be about and provide a purpose for reading part of the book. Children return to the group to discuss what they read. Children continue reading until the book is finished, frequently stopping to jointly discuss the story. This technique offers many opportunities for sharing feelings, discussing the story, and developing overall communication skills. Even the poorer reader can participate because the joint discussion helps to assure understanding of the story. After the reading is complete, creative extending activities can be assigned.

Shared Reading

A good book is even better when it is shared with someone else. Shared reading involves two people who read the same book, taking turns reading a few pages or paragraphs at a time. Discussion is going on and at the end creative activities can be assigned. This is another method that offers great support to the less capable reader.

. Book Extension Ideas

A "good" book lives on in the mind of the reader. You think about the characters, wish to talk with them, or long for another chapter. Extending activities allow the student to fulfill all of these wishes and more. Additionally, many skill areas are put to use in creative ways that can be adopted for varying levels of ability. This is particularly valuable for the migrant student who may only be in the district a brief time. The teacher can use activities that stress the immediate skill needs while involving the student in the same unit as the rest of the class. Note that the following extension ideas encourage independent thinking, writing, and reading skills.

1. Pretend to be a character in a story you have read. Write or tell what the character is like.
2. Write a letter to the main character in the story, sharing your reaction to something the character did.
3. Did you like the ending of the story? Write another one.
4. Tell about your family. Who in your family do you turn to when you have problems. How is your family like families you have read about? How is it different?
5. Write a description of a character you've read about that you would like to have as a friend and tell why.
6. Write a riddle about a story others have read, too; let them try to guess which story it is.
7. Write a diary of the main character showing the story from his point of view.
8. Write a sequel to the story.

Activities for Older Students

The older, more capable student can be a great resource for the teacher, the school, and other students in dealing with the issue of abuse and the special problems of the migrant student. One problem is providing the migrant child with the resources to continue learning about maltreatment and how to find help for him/herself should s/he move. Many of these ideas help students develop vital skills for communication, research, writing, and decisionmaking.

1. After reading a particular book, such as Those Travers Kids, decide what services could help this family. Where are those services located in this state? How would you find them in other states? Interview people who work in these fields. What services do they offer? What training did they need for this job? Transcribe the interviews so they can be shared with others.

2. Have students roleplay, reporting a case of abuse. What information would they need to share? Where would they find the number to call?

3. Have students prepare a card for their wallet that gives important safety numbers: fire, police, ambulance, child abuse hot line. Have children determine how they would find these numbers in another state.

4. Have students write a brief synopsis of a book about child abuse telling the plot, recommended age/grade level, and why they liked it. Compile the write-ups in a list to be given to each child so should they leave they have a resource for books that would help them continue to learn about abuse.

5. Students could organize an information Day on Child Abuse. After deciding what needs to be covered, speakers such as local Social Service Agency workers and school guidance staff could be invited. This could be a learning experience for faculty, parents, and students. By preparing materials, reviewing, and choosing audio-visual materials, students would greatly increase their own knowledge.

6. Have students write stories of their own families from the "Roots/Foxfire" approach. Explore the family history comparisons of how changing times affect family practices. The changes in parent-child relationships through the generations can be one of the focuses. Compile the histories into a book for sharing.

7. After your class has read about a case of child maltreatment, you can have them follow it from reporting to conclusion. This would introduce them to the social services system and the legal system. Do they agree with the outcome?

8. Have the students collect articles about maltreatment and discuss what seems to be the cause. This would assume you have shown films or presented other material to provide the background material they would need.

   The important characteristic of all these activities is that the students's opinions, background, and interests will determine their direction and outcome. Each activity can be the basis for continuing investigation and interaction between student and ideas.

What is the importance of self-concept?

One of the primary characteristics shared by the abusive parent and the abused child is low self-esteem. Such feelings prevent a child from reaching out to the world, learning new concepts, making new friends, or simply liking himself. An individual's self-concept is learned behavior, something which develops over time. It is generally affected by the environment in which we function and determines how we feel about ourselves and others. Poor self-concept leads a child to expect failure, experience difficulty making decisions, and hesitate to express feelings or opinions. It is easy to see why a child with a poor self-concept would have problems in the classroom.

Fortunately, research shows that self-concept can be improved. Through a positive attitude and a supportive classroom environment the educator can bring about change and greatly enrich a child's life.

Self-Concept Activities

- Star of the Week: Put a picture of a child in the center of a bulletin board and have everyone write something supportive about the "star". Put up that child's best work. At the end of the week, put the picture and the writings in booklet form and send it home with the child.

- Pat on the Back: Cut out hand shapes. A child prints another child's name on the palm and writes five positive descriptive words on the fingers. Then the hand is delivered to the child whose name is written on the palm. This activity often points out to students positive characteristics about themselves of which they were unaware.

- "Me" Collage: Children find pictures and words that tell about themselves, then paste them on a sheet of paper or on a tracing of their bodies. To appreciate themselves, children need to be aware of their own characteristics and preferences. They need to know it is okay to like different things than their peers, to look different, and to react differently to similar situations.

- Make Birthdays Special: Be sure to put each student's birthday on the class calendar. Plan a monthly celebration for all the students who have birthdays during the month. Design unique birthday cards that stress each student's special qualities.

Utilizing a variety of self-esteem enhancing techniques can help abused children to develop a firmer sense of self, as well as give them the incentive to reach out for assistance. Self-concept activities, in conjuction with bibliotherapy, can enhance awareness and ease the burden many migrant children experience.

Resources for Self-Concept Activities

Bean, R., & Clemes, H. How to Raise Children's Self-Esteem. Los Angeles: Price/Stern/Sloan Publishers, 1980.

Borba, M., & Borba, C.Self-Esteem: A Classroom Affair, Volumes 1 and 2. Minneapolis: Winston Press, Inc. 1982.

Canfield, J., & Wells, R.C. One Hundred Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in the Classroom: Handbook for Teachers and Parents. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1976.

Clark, A., & Others. How to Raise Teenagers' Self-Esteem. Los Angeles: Price/Stern/Sloan Publishers, 1987.

Children's Books on Child Abuse

The following books are but a few of the available titles that address the sensitive, difficult subject of child abuse and neglect:

Armstrong, Louise. Saving the Big Deal Baby, New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc. 1980. Plot: Physical abuse by parents. For ages 12 and up.

Bauer, M.D. Foster Child. New York: Seabury, 1977. Plot: Sexual abuse by a foster father. For ages 11-13.

Bradbury, Bianca. Those Travers Kids. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972. Plot: Physical abuse by a stepfather. For ages 12 and up.

Bulla, C.R. Benito. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell. 1961. Plot: Physical abuse by an uncle. For ages 8-10.

Byars, Betsy. The Pinballs. New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1977. Plot: Neglect and physical abuse by parents. For ages 8-12.

Hunt, Irene. The Lottery Rose. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976. Plot: Physical abuse by mother and her boyfriend. For ages 11-14.

Mackey, Gene and Helen Swan. Dear Elizabeth. 1983. Children's Institute of Kansas City, 9412 High Drive, Leawood, Kansas 66206. Plot: Sexual abuse by father. For ages 12 and up.

Roberts, Willo Davis. Don't Hurt Laurie. New York: Atheneum, 1978. Plot: Physical abuse by mother. For ages 10-14.

Ruby, Lois. Arriving At A Place You Never Left. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1977. Plot: Teen problems including physical abuse of sibling. For ages 13 and up.

Finding Books for Children

Below are some additional sources to consult in order to find "just the book" for that special child.

Dreyer, S. The Bookfinder: A Guide to Children's Literature About the Needs and Problems of Youth. Volumes I, II and III. American Guidance Service, Inc. (Note: Each volume reviews books from the previous few years.)

Pardeck, J.A., & Pardeck, J.T. Young People With Problems: A Guide to Bibliotherapy. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984.

Zaccaria, J.S., & Moses, H. Facilitating Human Development: The Use of Bibliotherapy in Teaching and Counseling. Champaign, Ill: Stipes, 1968.

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COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND SOCIAL SERVICES

By Lynn Balster Liontos

The growing chasm between society's complex problems and what the systems, as presently configured, can do to help is driving reform in all sectors. So says *Joining Forces*, a report by the National Association of State Boards of Education (Janet Levy 1989) calling for joint action. "Schools alone cannot compensate for the disadvantage created by troubled homes and troubled communities," states Levy. "Welfare and social services may momentarily mitigate a crisis, but cannot hold a hopeful future to those who lack abilities demanded by the job market." One of the key changes needed to make reform work, say many experts, is collaboration between education and human service agencies.

Why is collaboration mandatory?

"Using the schools to achieve racial balance, eliminate poverty, fight drug abuse, prevent pregnancy and reduce youth suicide is simply too much!" complains one educator (Dennis Rittenmeyer 1986). Over and over the *Joining Forces* staff heard the plea from both educators and human service workers, "We can't do it alone." The problems are simply too big and too complex.

Complex problems call for comprehensive services to the whole person and his or her community, says Lisbeth Schorr (Levy). Educators emphasize the importance of seeing the larger picture: That the child is part of a family, which is part of a community, and that they can't be separated. Nor can human services and education remain in separate categories. For one, they have overlapping administrative responsibilities and are mutually dependent on each other. "The goals that each system is setting for its own reform effort cannot be realized alone, but depend on complementary action by one or more sectors," says Levy. "Family crises and the conditions of poverty must be alleviated if children are able to concentrate in the classroom; children must succeed in the classroom if they are one day to support themselves and avoid long-term dependency."

Demographics also support collaboration, states Harold Hodgkinson (1989). For example, with metro areas crossing state lines, how do we deal with school districts that have allegiances to several states or cities? Or what about the link between education and crime? Eighty-two percent of America's prisoners are high school dropouts (Hodgkinson). Yet the cost of prisons is so astounding ($20,000 to maintain one prisoner for a year) that Hodgkinson says anything that keeps people out of prison, such as education, is an excellent long-term investment.

Finally, there are financial reasons. Hodgkinson doesn't see new funds for social programs forthcoming from government: "That being the case, we simply have to get more mileage out of the resources and organizations we now have." In fact, he stresses that we may be able to magnify the effectiveness of each dollar several times through interagency collaboration. For example, a dollar invested in Head Start saves you $7 in later services you don't need to provide (Hodgkinson). "Fully funding Head Start," he says, "would be the most cost effective way to reduce high school dropouts, welfare recipients, as well as astronomical jail costs."

On what issues should we be collaborating?

Joining Forces has launched a national effort to help education and human services work together to aid a targeted group: children and families at-risk. Of the children starting school in 1988, one in four was born into poverty, half a million were born to teen parents, and over half at some point will live with only one parent in households prone to poverty and stress (Levy). Add widespread substance abuse, inadequate health care, lack of affordable housing and you get families that often face many risks simultaneously, increasing the complexity of solutions.

Floyd Boschee (1989) also believes that if America is to develop a strong, competitive economy in an international market, quality public schooling will have to be provided to all children, including the disadvantaged.

The educational reform movement has generally not addressed the particular needs of disadvantaged students; in fact, it has made school success often harder for students already having difficulty.

Areas for collaboration, depending on age group, include health care, income support, social services for families, tutorial and remedial help, before- and after-school care, improved parental literacy and involvement, linkage between employment and education, and attendance policies that seek to retain rather than exclude.

How can we begin?

No one has all the answers, but here are ways to begin: (1) Study demographics, such as Hodgkinson's report, including demographics of your own community. (2) Go to joint conferences where structured dialogue between agencies is encouraged—or set up joint committee meetings, such as between education and health. (3) Make note of successful collaborative examples, both past and present.

(4) In the beginning, pick an issue to collaborate on that's not on anyone's specific turf, such as teen pregnancy. (5) Involve key officials for inspiration and organizational backing; involve all key stakeholders, such

as staff who work directly with the children; include neutral parties who can smooth out rough spots. (6) Watch for "categorical drift"—that is, each agency working on its own in isolation.

(7) Encourage information-sharing among systems about children and families, and reward staff for working with others outside their own sector. (8) Stress prevention and early intervention; look for ways the school system can, in working with other agencies, strengthen families and communities.

(9) Use effective team-building for shared control and decision-making; good communication is vital. (10) Focus on process; remember that collaboration is a means, not an end. (11) Set realistic time-frames; establish common goals to be implemented across agencies, with accountability spelled out. (12) Be willing to commit the necessary resources: successful collaboration takes time and energy.

What has collaboration achieved to date?

Joining Forces collected information nationwide about collaborative programs. These efforts are useful to study because they inform us about what works and how to build a base for collaboration. Two of the most important achievements that state and local collaborations have shown, according to Levy, are improvements in the delivery of existing services and the opportunity to provide new kinds of service, particularly to high-risk adolescents and communities.

Training, for example, is a major focus in Rockingham County, New Hampshire, where elementary teachers are trained by the Division of Children and Youth to recognize early signs that a child is in trouble. Locating services so they're readily accessible is another way of improving connections. Washington, D.C.'s Housing and Community Development Department and the D.C. Public Schools, for instance, have opened study rooms at two public housing complexes; teachers report that, as a result, children are showing improved study skills and turning in homework more reliably.

As an example of new kinds of services, Texas' Communities in Schools Program brings social service staff into the school where they work intensively with students at risk of dropping out. The result? The program reports it keeps 90 percent of its students in school. On the other hand, the Kent County, Michigan, Department of Social Services provides funds for outreach workers who follow up on attendance problems in early elementary grades—with the result of improved attendance for 90 percent of first graders.

How can we ensure future collaborative success?

The first collaborative steps have been taken. Yet virtually no one is satisfied, says Levy, that collaboration has gone far enough. For one thing, many of the best examples aren't widely known and thus aren't frequently replicated. More importantly, even when successful programs are in place, the changes and lessons usually haven't been incorporated on a systemwide basis. Too often they're like "special projects"; substantive policy discussions and priority-setting across systems are rare.

Thus a broader view of collaboration is needed: "Collaboration must be not just a luxury set of ad hoc connections, but a core aspect of organizational thinking and individual thinking, reaching from the commitments made by top policymakers to the way individual teachers and social workers interact with children and families" (Levy). This requires fundamental systemic change—a restructuring of organizational configurations, policies, program content, training, financing, and management.

Can we do it? Certainly it means sacrificing (giving up turf and comfortable traditions, for one thing). But Schorr says the problems with families and children have emerged at the same time that twenty years of research have produced a critical mass of knowledge needed for taking action. We *do* know enough to help, she says: "The question is whether we are willing to bite the bullet and do it" (Levy).

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OVERVIEW

ERIC® DIGEST NO. 60

Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

COLLABORATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

What Is Collaboration?

Investigating collaboration, one will find a variety of terms applied indiscriminately (e.g., partnerships, linkages, cosponsorships, interagency or interorganizational cooperation) to many types of relationships between organizations. To qualify a collaborative relationship for this Overview, five criteria have been identified:

- Programs or projects are jointly designed and monitored
- Some autonomy is sacrificed by participants
- Resources are contributed
- Organizations are mutually benefited
- Administrators are actively involved or are supportive of the relationship and maintain final decision-making powers

Advantages of Collaborative Relationships

Current issues are complex and funding is difficult as adult education providers try to meet the needs of the community, business, and industry; therefore, collaboration can be very advantageous. Information, ideas, and resources can be pooled, and duplication and harmful competition can be avoided. Beder (1984a) suggests that collaboration can be a major agency expansion strategy. Partners can provide useful information on needs assessments and program evaluation, suggestions for curriculum development, participants, use of facilities and/or state-of-the-art equipment, specialized staff, and additional revenue from increased enrollments or from donations. If these resources are used by the education agency to provide quality educational programs, power and prestige increase, expanding options for programing and marketing.

Features of Productive Collaborations

Institutional Factors

In spite of the numerous benefits of collaboration, some relationships have failed to accomplish desired objectives and have been terminated, resulting in negative relationships among participants and frustrations over unproductive investments of time and resources. Beder (1984b) identifies four dominant themes that are important for successful relationships:

- **Reciprocity**—There must be a balance in giving and receiving resources and in giving up domain and power. Each participant must perceive that resources less valued are being exchanged for resources that are more valued.
- **System Openness**—External relationships should be actively sought, and there should be a receptiveness to external perspectives.
- **Trust and Commitment**—Organizations cannot relinquish autonomy or perpetuate their collaborative relationship without trust and commitment. The level of trust and commitment can be affected by the history of past collaborative efforts and the styles and personalities of the people involved.
- **Structure**—The compatibility of organizational structures and cultures is an important factor. Fluid, flexible organizational structure helps partners adapt to one another and creates an environment of openness and receptivity.

Personal/Individual Factors

Obviously, the people participating in a collaborative relationship will contribute to its success or failure. The summary of a study that explored the benefits and problems of collaboration of 247 organizations (Hohmann 1985) identifies the individual behavior of administrators as having significant consequence. The following behaviors characterize administrators who are effective collaborators:

- The ability to recognize the value and bargaining power of resources in hand and to identify outsiders who can contribute needed resources
- The willingness to serve on committees and boards outside their organizations to develop networks that could lead to collaboration opportunities
- Skill in human relations and mediation
- Attentiveness to the details of planning and organization

Boundary spanners, individuals designated to represent an organization in a collaboration, profoundly influence their organization's perception of the relationship since information will be evaluated, interpreted, and selectively communicated at the spanner's discretion. The characteristics of the representative chosen can be indicative of the interest an organization has in the relationship. When there is a strong commitment toward expansion, high-level staff with the authority to contribute resources from their organizations are selected. These representatives communicate frequently with their organizations and are very influential in decision-making processes. If an organization desires to protect a domain rather than expand it, people in lower level positions who have little influence and communicate minimally are selected (Hohmann 1985).

Strategies

Several authors (Bovard and Silling 1986; Hemmings 1984; Hohmann 1985) suggest the following strategies for developing productive collaborative relationships:

- Identify and clearly state specific purposes for desiring a collaborative relationship
- Develop objective criteria for selecting partners
- Survey the environment to locate possible partners
- Negotiate written agreements that delineate organizational responsibilities, program design, fiscal arrangements, and established time frames
- Allow time during negotiations to consider all ideas and options, so that final decisions will be more fully supported
- Determine communication mechanisms and use them frequently
- Establish monitoring and evaluation procedures and channels to correct problems
- Familiarize the staff of the participating organizations with the agreements in the collaboration

Beder (1984b) warns that relying too heavily on one collaboration can threaten the autonomy of an organization; therefore, it is advisable to explore several options. Although developing a program with partners is more time consuming than working alone (Cervero 1984), planning time will diminish as the organization becomes more experienced.

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Examples of Collaborative Arrangements in Adult Education

The literature contains many examples of collaborative arrangements developed by adult education providers. The following are some of the most common types.

Business and Industry

To meet their training needs, business and industry leaders can establish their own training centers or collaborate with existing adult education agencies. A major difficulty with such collaborative arrangements has been the educational institutions' rigid orientation toward emphasizing broad-based education, which includes theoretical background, and the orientation of business and industry toward practical, job-relevant knowledge (Fingeret 1984). Fearing loss of control, educational agencies are reluctant to allow business and industry to assist with developing and updating the curriculum. In spite of these deterrents, collaboration is still a desirable option because business and industry cannot underrate the need for educational program planning and teaching expertise and the cost-effectiveness factor. Educational institutions can become more flexible with registration procedures and scheduling, customize and update curriculum, and offer on-site instruction. In exchange they will receive the opportunity to increase enrollments and therefore revenue, increased visibility and credibility within the community, and the use of state-of-the-art technology and equipment while working directly in the business environment.

Professional Groups

According to Cervero (1984), interorganizational collaboration is extensively practiced by continuing professional education providers and colleges and universities. Among the advantages he lists are the following:

- More prestige from being associated with a college or university
- Closer links between preservice and continuing education
- Higher quality programs resulting from shared resources
- Increased visibility for partners
- Greater probability that there will be a sufficient number of participants
- Availability of competent instruction on specialized topics
- Increased referrals to the college or university

Community Economic Development Programs

From the various community economic and social structures emerge problems that necessitate programs in adult education: job obsolescence, unemployment, illiteracy, limited-English proficiency, and education and employment for older adults. Concerned agencies such as the state department of education, city government, social service agencies, an urban renewal committee, or a state employment commission may form an interagency collaboration council to identify resources for the needed programs, or it may choose to develop its own adult education center. Valentine's (1984) case study demonstrates the necessity of particularly competent leadership for this type of collaboration. Satisfying the diverse interests of program sponsors and program participants requires strong organizational, management, and interpersonal relations skills.

Conclusion

Collaborative relationships are desirable because they expand the capacity of the participants to accomplish objectives that could not be accomplished as well alone (Hemmings 1984). Additionally, as agencies work cooperatively, they learn about each other, understanding "what lies behind an organization's point of view, the constraints under which an organization operates, and the strengths and weaknesses" (p. 6). Successful collaborations are difficult to achieve because of the need to balance autonomy and involvement while sustaining the organizing force or goal (Hohmann 1985). Some key factors necessary for a productive reltionship are trust, flexibility, cooperativeness, compatibility of organizational structures, sufficient planning and organization, competent leadership, and perception of mutual benefit.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

College Counseling in Independent Schools

Background

The number of students in independent schools today makes up scarcely ten percent of the nation's high school population. Nonetheless, these students comprise a significant minority because they tend to be highly motivated, intelligent, and in many cases able to pay the high costs of attending the nation's colleges and universities. Very often independent school students aspire to attend selective colleges, and their presence in freshman classes averages about thirty percent, a number which considerably exceeds their percentage in the national pool of college-bound high school students .

Independent school students are exposed to a rigorous high school curriculum which prepares them well for the challenges of the college classroom. They are, moreover, encouraged to take part in a variety of extracurricular activities at their schools and to develop an appreciation for a shared core of community values. They are also urged to develop leadership skills which will eventually enable them to play dynamic and useful roles in our society as adults.

Most independent schools are deeply committed to providing an education which is noted for its quality as well as the diversity of its student body. The charter of Phillips Exeter Academy, for instance, enjoins the school to seek "youth from every quarter," so that it may adequately instruct them in the "great and real business of living." In recent years the quest for diversity has led to the inclusion of a number of minority and disadvantaged students in independent schools. Alumni support and endowment funds have enabled many schools to assemble diverse student bodies which are similar in percentages to that of many colleges.

The diversity, ability, and ambition of independent school students inevitably focuses their attention on gaining admission to selective and challenging colleges. Consequently their college counselors have multiple roles to play as they assist them on their way.

The Counselor as Analyst

The initial role of the counselor is that of an ***analyst***, who must understand the pressures of the present college admissions system. Colleges have launched intensive marketing campaigns to attract a greater diversity of students. Ten years ago fifty percent of the freshman classes of the most selective colleges were composed of independent school students. Today that figure is thirty percent or less. The resultant pressure on independent school students to find places in selective colleges, and on their counselors who try to assist them, has risen markedly in recent years.

A second pressure which elicits the analyst's skills comes from the economic realm. The rising cost of a college education in the past decade has further intensified the pressure on college counselors in independent schools to make it possible for their students to be admitted to very selective colleges. The pricing strategy on the part of colleges is to enhance their prestige by raising their prices. From the point of view of students' families, the increased cost of a college education has engendered an attitude that a college education is something of special value and, therefore, measurable by the *name* of the particular college or university. The college cost factor produces a simplification of the college admissions process into a sort of service for which the parent is paying, the result of which will be the *delivery* of a prestige college by the college counselor at the end of the student's education at an independent school.

The Counselor as Advocate

The independent school counselor, like all counselors, is also an ***advocate*** who desires to support his/her intelligent, motivated, and well-intentioned counselees vigorously as they seek to gain admission to challenging colleges. In independent schools the counselor-to-student ratio is often low enough for the counselor and student to spend a good deal of time together and come to know each other well. The relationships which are often established enable the counselor to secure the trust of the student and to play an influential and educational role in shaping the student's attitudes toward academic, personal, and moral questions. In turn, this relationship enables the counselor to represent the personal and academic qualities of their students very vividly to college admissions officers. On the other hand, independent school college admissions counselors are generally deeply committed to the idea of educating the "whole" student and encouraging counselees and families to resist the competitive impetus of the marketplace and look at the broader question of which colleges or universities would best suit the needs of the student.

The Counselor as Advisor to Parents

In addition to the pressures of the college admissions marketplace on independent school counselors and their extensive involvement with students, these counselors are generally more involved with parents than their public school counterparts. In this role as ***advisor to parents***, counselors have to keep in mind that, on average, seventy percent of the annual budget of an independent school is provided for by tuition paid by parents! More important is that parents often choose to send their children to independent schools because they are deeply committed

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to the notion that the development of human values, as well as intellectual skills, is an important part of their child's education. Counselors and parents frequently find themselves discussing together these shared values and the challenges of parenting along with college admissions strategies.

When an independent school is a boarding school, college counselors frequently function, along with other faculty , as surrogate parents. Counselors are directly engaged in helping students inventory their academic and extracurricular interests, evaluate their personal strengths, and search for, choose, and gain admission to appropriate colleges and universities.

Whether the counselor is operating in "loco parentis," or as an advisor to a student who attends an independent school by day and lives with his or her parents in the evening, the counselor needs to understand what the parents expect of both the student and the school. In addition, the counselor must ensure that parents are made an integral part of the decision-making process. Newsletters, telephone calls, and office conferences are invariably a part of that process.

The Counselor as Teacher

Many college counselors are also ***classroom teachers*** and bring from that experience a deep commitment to college counseling as an educational enterprise. Many work extremely hard as counselors to stress the skills and the insights which can be gained by students as they move through the college selection process. Independent school counselors want students to develop self assessment skills, and to be able to analyze college literature and audio-visual materials critically. Counselors must help students analyze the objective data about the difficulty of admission to particular schools, and then establish a range of choices. They also want students to match themselves with the academic and extracurricular programs, as well as the philosophies of the respective colleges they choose, and to learn to present themselves cogently and effectively in interviews, in correspondence, and in their admissions applications.

College counselors in independent schools frequently find themselves involved in teaching extracurricular activities such as sports, music, or drama. Boarding school counselors are able to describe students as individuals on the basis of knowing them in their dormitories, and watching them interact with other students. This invariably redounds to the student's advantage in the college admissions quest.

The Counselor as Intermediary

The final role of college counselors in independent schools are as ***intermediaries*** in the relationship between school and college.Many independent schools have had a longstanding tradition of sending a number of their graduates to particular colleges or universities. That pattern has now changed, but the contacts with colleges and universities endure. The result is that many independent school counselors are well known and respected by admissions officers. College admissions officers tend to rely on the judgment of counselors known to them in occasional instances where a student is at the margin of their admissions criteria.

Beyond the formal admissions process, many college admissions officers are invited to speak to students and parent groups at independent schools. The result of these relationships between counselor and college admissions officer sometimes results in a misconception on the part of parents and the public. They may view the counselor as a broker in the admissions process, and expect him or her to be able to guarantee admission to a particular college with which the school has a supposedly "close" relationship. These expectations are almost never fulfilled. College admissions officers across the nation have constructed a very fair and open admissions process. Counselors in independent schools often have to spend a significant amount of their time and energy educating parents about this reality. They must convince parents to take a broader view and not connect the cost of their child's education with a particular "result," i.e., entry to a prestige college.

Conclusion

Counselors in independent schools invariably argue that the result of an independent school education should be an education of the "whole" person rather than admission to a particular college, and that both school and parents should focus on ensuring that the student's self esteem be protected, if not expanded, in the process of clearing the college admissions hurdle. As America continues to seek new ways to preserve democracy and provide quality within its educational system, college counseling in independent schools provides a fascinating challenge and opportunity.

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ERIC Digest

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COLLEGE PLANNING FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED YOUTH

There are more than 3,000 colleges and universities in the United States. Choosing among them is a complex task. Recruiting procedures and a wide variety of publications such as college viewbooks offer idyllic scenes of campus life, but do little to clarify student decision making. The increasing number and variety of books on how to get accepted by the college of your choice adds to the anxiety and expectations. Unless the match between institutions and students is truly a good one, both are likely to be disappointed.

Gifted and talented (GT) students often have problems beyond those of most other students who consider college and career choices. A systematic, collaborative approach is needed whereby students learn that college planning is part of life career development; it need not be a finite event that begins and ends mysteriously or arbitrarily.

Learning About Oneself: A 6-Year Process

A coherent, programmatic approach to college planning provides opportunities for students to obtain information from counselors, other adults, and peers who understand their needs and who will listen to them, interpret and clarify their experiences, and discuss their concerns about changing self-concepts. Programs should include students who are identified as gifted (generally through IQ scores) but who may not be achieving academically. Students can learn about themselves, their community, and career options in a wide variety of ways. *College Planning for Gifted Students* (Berger, 1989) provides detailed information.

Seventh and Eighth Grades. Guidance activities emphasize self-awareness, time management, work/study skills, and an introduction to career awareness. Students develop a 4- to 6-year academic plan and decision-making skills. Participation in regional talent searches is encouraged, and students are provided with information on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and/or the American College Test (ACT), the screening instruments employed by talent searches. Planning for advanced courses often begins as early as the eighth grade, especially in the case of sequential courses such as mathematics, languages, and sciences. Many students will not be ready or able to begin a sequence. In such cases, summer programs, sponsored by regional talent searches or by-mail courses provided by some regional talent search programs may be a viable option.

Ninth and Tenth Grades. Guidance activities continue to help students clarify intellectual and social/emotional experiences, establish a sense of identity and direction, and set short- and long-term goals. Students are encouraged to identify and pursue interests. By 10th grade, they become aware of how their academic subjects, values, interests, and goals relate to careers. They also begin to learn that some interests and talents develop into artistic or scientific convictions while others develop into leisure activities.

Eleventh and Twelfth Grades. Guidance activities include arranging for mentor relationships and internships. Through group workshops, students learn how colleges make selections, who is involved in the admissions process, how students are evaluated, and what they can offer that a college requires and desires. They learn about the application process and how to present themselves so that the institution will recognize them as a good match.

Parents can support an effective guidance program by participating in school career centers and providing students with opportunities for enrichment.

Learning About Colleges

Learning about colleges is a two-step process. Step 1 involves collecting general information by reading, talking with people (asking questions), and visiting colleges. By the end of 11th grade, the student should be able to develop a list of 10 to 20 colleges based on personal criteria. Step 2 involves analyzing and evaluating information. Students should be attuned to their needs and be creative researchers. By the middle of 12th grade, the student should be able to narrow his or her list to five or six colleges, taking into consideration (a) personal values, interests, and needs; (b) the variety and range of available college opportunities; (c) realistic constraints such as cost and distance; and (d) the method used by the colleges to select a freshman class (selectivity factor). The final list should include a safety school (one that will definitely accept the student), a long shot (admissions criteria are slightly beyond the student's credentials), and three or four colleges having admissions criteria that match the student's credentials.

Some gifted students are drawn to the most selective colleges and universities, schools that receive more than 10 applications for every freshman vacancy. A student who aspires to a highly selective college can expect a highly competitive application review. Students should understand that the way they address the application process may be the critical factor determining acceptance or rejection.

The application requires the following two kinds of information:

1. Objective information including biographical data, information on academic performance, standardized test scores such as SATs or ACTs, Achievement Test scores, advanced placement (AP) examination grades, and additional numerical information.
2. Subjective information including extracurricular activities, recommendations, essay and/or personal statement, and a personal interview.

What Colleges Look For

- *Academic performance*: Grade point average and class rank.
- *Academic rigor*: Evidence of superior ability in the form of honors, GT, or AP courses. (Some colleges ignore honors or GT classes because they are of unknown quality.)

  Depth of study in areas such as foreign languages and mathematics.

  Quality: Four or five academic subjects each year (English, mathematics, science, history, language).

  Balance: Evidence that the student took a broad curriculum (mathematics and science, history, and English courses).

  Trends: Evidence as to whether the student's grades are gradually improving each year. Recent performance is the most important indicator of the student's current level of ability and motivation.
- *Consistency*: The parts of the application should fit together to provide a common theme and make the student "come alive" on paper. Recommendations should support and be consistent with both the academic record and what the student says about himself or herself. A quirk in the transcript (e.g., a low grade in an academic course during 11th or 12th grade) should be accompanied by an explanation. High SAT scores combined with a relatively low GPA provide an inconsistent picture of an applicant (e.g., high ability/low motiva tion). The student should address these situations in an essay or personal statement.
- *Standardized tests*: PSATs, SATs, ACTs, and Achievement Tests are the only objective way a college can compare students from all parts of the country. Some large universities screen a vast number of applicants by combining each student's SAT or ACT score with GPA and class rank. Students who are not good test takers should avoid such colleges or make sure that their scores are not so low that they can be eliminated from consideration. Selective schools may emphasize achievement test scores. If students wait until senior year, only three tests may be taken.
- *Extracurricular activities and other supporting material*: When highly selective colleges decide between two students who are academically equal, the creative presentation of extracurricular activities, the quality of recommendations, the essay or personal statement, the interview, and other supporting material make a difference.
- *Community service*: Admissions officers know that an altruistic student, one who contributes to community life without regard for compensation, is likely to contribute to college life, be academically successful, and form a long-term attachment to the college or university.
- *Recommendations*: Counselor and teacher recommendations should present a positive picture of the applicant, distinguish between the applicant and others who are equally qualified, and be consistent with the rest of the student's application.
- *The application essay:* The essay can reassure the admissions committee that the student is capable of college-level work. Many gifted students have a difficult time with open-ended questions. Some create beautiful prose that, on the surface, is convincing. A closer look may reveal that none of the ideas are documented, grounded in fact, or based on any genuine information.

A counselor's role as student advocate and resource does not end when letters of acceptance arrive. Some students have difficulty breaking away. These students spend years in academic and social activities that nurture close friendships, and they sense that their lives are about to change. Although this is true for adolescents in general, gifted students may especially need guidance activities that ease the transition from high school to college.

College and career planning may be particularly difficult for some gifted students. However, it can be a growth-promoting experience for all participants when the ultimate goal—student decisions based on realistic criteria that result in a satisfying life—is kept at the forefront of all decision-making activity.

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Prepared by Sandra L. Berger. The material in this digest was derived from *College Planning for Gifted Students* (1989) by S. Berger, published by The Council for Exceptional Children and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Fact Sheet

Comprehensive Guidance Program Design

Overview

Guidance in the past has been a set of loosely related services whose focus has shifted with cultural trends. In the last two decades, the concept of guidance for development has emerged based on the idea of describing human development in terms of occupational, educational, and personal/social needs. Schools have attempted to provide "comprehensive" services by the simple addition of new programs and activities in response to the identification of new student needs. The result has been a number of problems:

- lack of coordination of activities
- duplication of efforts by several staff members
- confusion about counselors' roles
- unexamined assumptions about the relationship between staff activities and student outcomes
- focus of attention on a few student subgroups (e.g., seniors, the college bound, deviants)
- unrealistic expectations for the outcomes of guidance activities
- difficulty in identifying and evaluating the actual outcomes of guidance

In addition to these internal difficulties, the socioeconomic situation has changed, and support for the development of new services has diminished. Guidance administrators are now faced with:

- an increasing demand for accountability
- a decreasing level of financial support
- growing public dissatisfaction with education outcomes (both cognitive and affective)
- public pressure to use available funds for back-to-basics

Rationale for a New Direction

Research has shown that psychological maturity is a better predictor of subsequent life/career satisfaction than are school grades and academic content mastery. The schools' response to the back-to-basics demand should therefore not neglect students' affective development. Moreover, if education is seen as the transmission of a culture's survival skills, instruction in the basics is not enough. Students also need the communication and socialization skills involved in successful career development. A career is now considered to be more than just an occupation; it has both a longitudinal dimension with sequential roles such as student, worker, and retiree, and a cross-sectional dimension consisting of the interactive relationships between job, family, and community roles. Students now face a wide range of choices in occupations, career patterns, and life styles. To deal with these choices wisely they need:

- extensive practice in problem-solving and decision-making
- access to occupational information and skill in processing information efficiently
- an understanding of personal interests, values, and abilities and the importance of each to life/career satisfaction
- knowledge of social and economic trends and their effect on individual life/career development

Guidelines for a New Comprehensive Program

Leaders in the guidance field have recently advocated a comprehensive program that would meet the complex guidance needs of today's students and, at the same time, resolve many of the problems experienced by guidance in the past. If fully implemented, the proposed program could very well decrease costs and increase effectiveness. Instead of a set of loosely related services, the new program would:

- consist of interrelated and interdependent services organized around a conceptual model
- be an integral part of the total educational system
- address the life career development needs of all students, K-12
- be student-outcome oriented rather than counselor-activity oriented
- contain a self-monitoring system to provide for systematic program improvement

Specific guidelines are as follows:

1. *Build on the existing program.* Evolution is usually more acceptable and less costly than revolution.
2. *Use a teamwork approach.* Involvement helps people feel a sense of ownership and makes implementation of new directions more acceptable. More important, however, is the fact that there exists a wealth of knowledge, wisdom, skill, and creativity in teachers, parents, students, administrators, and members of the community. Tapping these resources by asking members of the various groups to serve on advisory councils, planning committees, and special task forces can significantly enhance both the quantity and quality of guidance services.
3. *Identify the desired student outcomes.* List a large number of potentially desirable student outcomes and ask parents, teachers, administrators, students, and other relevant community representatives to rate the importance of each outcome. Using the results of this survey (and a guidance team composed of representatives from the various groups identified), select a set of high-priority student outcomes that the school can realistically address with existing resources. As soon as

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possible, report the survey results, the selected top-priority items, the rationale for selection, and plans for the next step to all participants and ask for their comments and suggestions. This feedback not only assures people that their input has been used, but also clarifies for everyone the specific goals of the guidance program.

4. *Plan program activities which are directly linked to the desired student outcomes.* For each student outcome, diagram a conceptual model of the stages through which each student must progress in order to achieve the desired outcome stage. Then, for each stage, link (diagrammatically):
   (a) the activities that would directly help the student reach that stage; and
   (b) examples of observable evidence that would demonstrate the student's mastery of relevant skills and knowledge.

   An examination of the entire set of conceptual models in terms of the logic of the linkages (activity → evidence → achievement) and the potential areas of overlap can eliminate unnecessary and irrelevant activities. This in turn increases the cost effectiveness of the program. Also, by having clear criteria for student readiness to progress to the next stage of each desired outcome, the guidance program can be truly responsive to individual developmental needs.

5. *Develop an on-going evaluation system.* No program is perfect when it is first implemented. Nor do students' needs remain the same over time. A self-monitoring evaluation system can provide information necessary to:
   (a) prove program effectiveness thereby meeting external demands for accountability; and
   (b) improve program effectiveness thereby maintaining a guidance program that is dynamically responsive to the changing needs of students and society.

The Counselor's Role

In the past, undefined and/or unrealistic expectations of the guidance program have made school counselors particularly vulnerable to criticism and assignment to inappropriate (usually clerical) tasks. Guidance has often been viewed as an ancillary (and dispensable) service. Unfortunately, counselor training institutions have perpetuated this problem by emphasizing counselors' roles as therapists and minimizing their roles as educators. The new comprehensive guidance program would put school counselors back in the mainstream of education and would require a more professional and cost-effective use of their skills.

While one-to-one counseling is still recognized as quite valuable in some cases, it is no longer seen as a cost-effective or viable means for delivering comprehensive school guidance services. The new program requires counselors to "stretch" their skills by:

- engaging in more group counseling and guidance activities
- formalizing and coordinating teachers' and parents' roles in guidance
- sharing expertise with teachers and parents through individual and group consultation
- learning how to extend measurement concepts from the individual to the program level (thus acquiring the expertise to develop and manage a self-monitoring program evaluation system)
- providing change-agent leadership for on-going program improvement

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Cooperative Learning Strategies and Children

Lawrence Lyman and Harvey C. Foyle

Cooperative learning is a teaching strategy involving children's participation in small group learning activities that promote positive interaction. This digest discusses the reasons for using cooperative learning in centers and classrooms, ways to implement the strategy, and the long-term benefits for children's education.

Why Try Cooperative Learning?

Cooperative learning promotes academic achievement, is relatively easy to implement, and is not expensive. Children's improved behavior and attendance, and increased liking of school, are some of the benefits of cooperative learning (Slavin, 1987).

Although much of the research on cooperative learning has been done with older students, cooperative learning strategies are effective with younger children in preschool centers and primary classrooms. In addition to the positive outcomes just noted, cooperative learning promotes student motivation, encourages group processes, fosters social and academic interaction among students, and rewards successful group participation.

Can Cooperative Learning Be Used in Early Childhood Classes?

When a child first comes to a structured educational setting, one of the teacher's goals is to help the child move from being aware only of himself or herself to becoming aware of other children. At this stage of learning, teachers are concerned that children learn to share, take turns, and show caring behaviors for others. Structured activities which promote cooperation can help to bring about these outcomes. One of the most consistent research findings is that cooperative learning activities improve children's relationships with peers, especially those of different social and ethnic groups.

When children begin to work on readiness tasks, cooperation can provide opportunities for sharing ideas, learning how others think and react to problems, and practicing oral language skills in small groups. Cooperative learning in early childhood can promote positive feelings toward school, teachers, and peers. These feelings build an important base for further success in school.

What Are the Advantages of Cooperative Learning for Elementary School Students?

According to Glasser (1986), children's motivation to work in elementary school is dependent on the extent to which their basic psychological needs are met. Cooperative learning increases student motivation by providing peer support. As part of a learning team, students can achieve success by working well with others. Students are also encouraged to learn material in greater depth than they might otherwise have done, and to think of creative ways to convince the teacher that they have mastered the required material.

Cooperative learning helps students feel successful at every academic level. In cooperative learning teams, low-achieving students can make contributions to a group and experience success, and all students can increase their understanding of ideas by explaining them to others (Featherstone, 1986).

Components of the cooperative learning process as described by Johnson and Johnson (1984) are complimentary to the goals of early childhood education. For example, well-constructed cooperative learning tasks involve positive interdependence on others and individual accountability. To work successfully in a cooperative learning team, however, students must also master interpersonal skills needed for the group to accomplish its tasks.

Cooperative learning has also been shown to improve relationships among students from different ethnic backgrounds. Slavin (1980) notes: "Cooperative learning methods [sanctioned by the school] embody the requirements of cooperative, equal status interaction between students of different ethnic backgrounds..."

For older students, teaching has traditionally stressed competition and individual learning. When students are given cooperative tasks, however, learning is assessed individually, and rewards are given on the basis of the group's performance (Featherstone, 1986). When children are taught the skills needed for group participation when they first enter a structured setting, the foundation is laid for later school success.

How Can Teachers Use Cooperative Learning Strategies?

Foyle and Lyman (1988) identify the basic steps involved in successful implementation of cooperative learning activities:

1. The content to be taught is identified, and criteria for mastery are determined by the teacher.

2. The most useful cooperative learning technique is identified, and the group size is determined by the teacher.

3. Students are assigned to groups.

4. The classroom is arranged to facilitate group interaction.

5. Group processes are taught or reviewed as needed to assure that the groups run smoothly.

6. The teacher develops expectations for group learning and makes sure students understand the purpose of the learning that will take place. A time line for activities is made clear to students.

7. The teacher presents initial material as appropriate, using whatever techniques she or he chooses.

8. The teacher monitors student interaction in the groups, and provides assistance and clarification as needed. The teacher reviews group skills and facilitates problem-solving when necessary.

9. Student outcomes are evaluated. Students must individually demonstrate mastery of important skills or concepts of the learning. Evaluation is based on observations of student performance or oral responses to questions; paper and pencil need not be used.

10. Groups are rewarded for success. Verbal praise by the teacher, or recognition in the class newsletter or on the bulletin board can be used to reward high-achieving groups.

Conclusion

Early childhood educators can use many of the same strategies and activities currently being used to encourage cooperation and interaction in older children. Effective cooperative learning experiences increase the probability of children's success throughout their school years.

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Cooperative Problem-Solving in the Classroom

Jonathan Tudge and David Caruso

Over the years, early childhood education has stressed the importance of cooperative play and learning for the young child's development (Dewey, 1897). Cooperative learning involves children in the active exchange of ideas rather than passive learning. Research has demonstrated the potential of cooperative problem-solving for enhancing young children's cognitive development and learning.

Cooperative problem-solving is likely to be effective if children share a goal, and have differing perspectives on the best way of attaining it. This sharing of differing points of view in the attempt to achieve a common goal results in cognitive advance. Cooperative problem-solving often occurs in classrooms—for example, when two children attempt to ride on a swing at the same time.

Piaget and Cooperative Problem-Solving

Research on the effects of collaboration between peers on cognitive development has primarily been based on Piaget's theory concerning the impact of social interaction on cognitive and moral development (Piaget, 1932, 1959). Piaget maintained that opportunities for becoming less egocentric are more common when children discuss things with each other because then they must face the fact that not everyone has the same perspective on a situation. Psychologists have based most of their research in this area on Piaget's theory, and have examined children's performance on conservation tasks, working in pairs and individually. Several researchers have found that children who were paired with a more advanced child were later able to solve conservation tasks at a higher level, while children who worked individually did not improve.

Piagetian scholars argue that cognitive conflict—a difference in perspective that leads to discussion of each partner's opinion—is necessary for development. In trying to resolve conflicts, partners have to explain to each other their points of view. In the course of the explanation, the less advanced child can be led to greater understanding.

Study results (Tudge, 1985, 1986) suggest that in the absence of feedback, cognitive conflict (brought about by pairing children with different perspectives) only helps children who reason at a less advanced level than their partner when the partner is confident of his or her opinions. But in a third study (Tudge, 1987), in which children discovered whether or not their views were correct, children improved regardless of whether their partner initially reasoned at a less or a more advanced level. Thus our research indicates that the effects of cooperative problem-solving are by no means straightforward. We can merely suggest possible consequences of encouraging collaboration in the classroom.

Guidelines for Teachers

Teachers can encourage children to interact and share their perspectives during cooperative play by:

Planning activities in which children have a shared goal.
It is not enough to have children working side by side on an activity. For example, when two children are playing with building blocks together but working on different parts of a structure, they may not be trying to accomplish the same goal. Children who try to achieve a shared objective will find it helpful to discuss their ideas about the problem and agree on a strategy. Teachers can promote real cooperative activity by encouraging collaboration during the activity-planning stage.

Ensuring that the goal is intrinsically interesting.
Young children are likely to pursue a goal only if they find it interesting. Quite often, when teachers present problems that they see as important, they inadvertently fail to consider the children's degree of interest in solving the problem. One effective approach for maximizing the child's intrinsic interest is to involve children in activities in which they can determine their own objectives, that is, activities with several possible goals or which offer several ways of reaching the goals.

Making it possible for children to achieve their goal through their own actions.
This guideline, suggested by Kamii and DeVries (1978) for physical knowledge activities, can lead to successful cooperative problem-solving. Through acting on objects and observing the effects, young children receive feed-

back, which helps them adapt their differing perspectives when working cooperatively. Rolling a ball down a ramp to hit a target, for example, provides many opportunities for adapting the actions involved. Children can vary the speed and direction of the ball, the slope of the ramp, and so forth. They can discuss why they miss the target and the best way to solve the problem.

Seeing to it that the results of the child's actions are visible and immediate.
The give and take of sharing perspectives and strategies during cooperative activity will be encouraged by immediate feedback about the results of children's actions. As Kamii and DeVries (1978) point out, when children see results, they are likely to be motivated to keep trying different strategies. Contrast an activity such as planting seeds, which results in a long-delayed reaction, with a game of target-ball, in which the child chooses the objective, produces the object's action, and observes an immediate result.

The Teacher's Role in Cooperative Problem-Solving

Because the objective of cooperative problem-solving is for children to share perspectives as they pursue goals, it is essential that teachers encourage and suggest rather than give directions. These guidelines will help teachers in this effort:

1. *Encourage children to interact with each other.*
A teacher might introduce an activity in an open-ended way by saying, "Here's an activity for 2 or 3 children. What do you think we could do with these things, Brett and Sally?" This conveys the importance of each child's perspective and encourages children to come up with their own goals.

2. *Help children clarify or adapt their shared goals.*
In order for children to pursue goals cooperatively, they must agree upon a clearly delineated goal. During early childhood, when children often act first and discuss later, a teacher can play a vital role by helping them clarify their goal before they attempt to solve the problem. Teachers can verbalize the objective for the children. A teacher might say, for example, "I see. You're trying to get this water over there by using the tubes and funnels."

3. *Involve children who are unlikely to initiate.*
Quieter children are less likely than more assertive children to become involved or state their ideas. It is critical for teachers to encourage these children to participate and to help them state their perspectives on the problem.

Teaching strategies that may be appropriate for other activities limit the effectiveness of cooperative problem-solving. Even if children are struggling, it is not appropriate to demonstrate solutions or solve a problem for them. Research suggests that arriving at the correct answer is less important for children's cognitive development than the process of struggling with the problem cooperatively.

Conclusion

As Damon (1984) points out, when children explore new possibilities jointly, their thinking is not constrained by an expert who "knows better," but rather is limited only by the boundaries of their mutual imaginations. When teachers present problems that children at differing developmental levels can work on together, encourage children's efforts to share perspectives, and help children arrive at a common objective, cooperative problem-solving becomes a valuable part of the curriculum.

This digest was adapted by Sue Ann Kendall from "Cooperative Problem Solving in the Classroom: Enhancing Young Children's Cognitive Development," *Young Children*, November, 1988, pp. 46-52.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Counseling Abused Children

Introduction

Counseling abused children is a challenging task for practitioners. The incidence of reported and substantiated child abuse and neglect has risen dramatically since the "discovery" of the *Battered Child Syndrome* in the sixties, and subsequent mandatory reporting laws. The nation has moved through stages of public awareness about the phenomenon. Currently practitioners have become aware of the widespread sexual abuse of girls (estimated at one in four females) and are developing increasing awareness of the sexual abuse of boys. Rapid changes in the knowledge base demand that counselors keep abreast of the indicators of maltreatment, the laws for reporting suspected abuse, and the ways in which children can best be served to overcome effects of a negative family experience.

All fifty states require that helping professionals report suspected child abuse to the child protection agency or the police. Many counselors experience difficulty with reporting requirements for fear of violating the trust of a child, or creating mistrust with the child's parents. Such reporting to Children's Protective Services has saved the lives of many children, and brought help to families. Although children are still removed from their families and placed in foster homes when it is necessary for their protection, the emphasis has shifted to serving children in their own homes, and providing services to help the family overcome the situations which lead to abuse or neglect. Counselors should be familiar with child abuse reporting laws in their own states. Typically counselors and school personnel are required to report suspected abuse, and are granted immunity from liability because they are presumed to be acting in good faith. Many states also have criminal or civil penalties established for mandated professionals who fail to report.

Types of Maltreatment

A common theme underlying most forms of maltreatment—physical abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse and exploitation—is that of emotional hurt. The child who is physically abused often suffers emotionally from inconsistent parenting and fear. The sexually abused child suffers from the lack of affection or supervision which leaves him/her vulnerable to the subtle advances of the perpetrator; and the neglected child becomes anxious or apathetic about a life in which basic needs aren't met. One general consequence of child maltreatment is developmental fixation or "freezing." The child who comes to the attention of the counselor due to difficulties in the classroom or poor social adjustment may very well be a maltreated child.

Neglect

Neglect accounts for more deaths than the physical abuse of children. In a national study of reported child maltreatment, only 4% experienced major physical injury, while 60% experienced a type of physical neglect. Neglect was associated with 56% of child deaths (American Humane Association, 1983). All types of neglect are essentially a failure by the parents to provide something needed for the child's healthy growth and development. The concept of neglect includes the assumption that some harm must befall the child as a result of the parents' failure to provide.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is usually defined as the intentional or nonaccidental inflicting of injury on a child by a caregiver. It manifests as bruises, welts, broken bones, burns, lacerations, or even death. It may occur through hitting, striking, beating, kicking, biting, slapping or other forms of violence directed at a child. Many, if not most, parents who abuse children have been reared in an environment in which some form of maltreatment occurred. Physical abuse appears in all socioeconomic classes, but is correlated with the stresses of poverty.

Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

> Child sexual abuse is the adult (or older child) exploitation of the normal childhood development process, through the use of sexual activity. Examples of the types of sexual activity might include touching, kissing, fondling, manipulations of the genitals with the fingers, and actual sexual intercourse (Stovall, 1981).

In examining patterns of sexual abuse and exploitation, it is important to keep in mind that the knowledge base is changing rapidly. While earlier belief was that sexual abuse perpetrators were almost always men, McCarty (1986) studied female perpetrators and found both accomplices who aided male perpetrators, and independent abusers, who had come from a background of bad childhoods, unhappy marriages and earlier sexual victimization. Within the last decade it has been acknowledged that male children are also sexually victimized and are at great risk (Bolton, Morris, & MacEachron, 1989). It currently appears that female children are more likely to be sexually abused in an incestuous situation, while more male children are sexually abused outside the home.

Emotional Abuse or Neglect

Emotional neglect generally implies a consistent indifference to the child's needs and covers a range of behavior, from the parent who never speaks to the child and doesn't remove the child from a crib, to the psychotic parent unable to acknowledge the reality of the child's world, or that the child actually exists. Emotional abuse, on

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the other hand, implies an active rejection or persecution of the child by the parent. Chronic verbal abuse erodes the child's self-esteem. The use of confinement or excessive punishment is also a form of emotional abuse. Emotional abuse or neglect is usually accompanied by other forms of maltreatment such as sexual abuse or physical abuse. Clearly, children who are being maltreated are not getting their developmental needs met.

Identifying Maltreatment

Children who have been maltreated are usually unwilling or unable to reveal their situation to a counselor because of parental threats, or a feeling of loyalty to the family. While sensitive interviewing may help to unearth details of maltreatment, counselors need to be aware of non-verbal ways in which the message of abuse may be communicated.

The presence of one indicator alone does not necessarily mean that maltreatment has occurred. The counselor looks rather for configurations of indicators. If there are a number of indicators, the counselor has reason to suspect maltreatment, even if the child has not confided in the counselor. When abuse is suspected, the counselor is obligated, under law, to report this concern to Children's Protective Services.

The Team Approach

Counseling, in and of itself, cannot ensure the safety of a maltreated child. There will be many professionals involved in working with maltreated children. Typically, a Children's Protective Services worker may coordinate the intervention. Medical personnel will be involved. This may include a coordinating pediatrician who will follow the child's growth and development, several specialists and other health practitioners such as a physical therapist or public health nurse who has worked with the family. If the child must be removed from the home, the team may include a foster parent. Educators and school personnel are also an important part of the team. They can help to monitor a child's day-to-day safety and progress, and can build programs to help the child's self-esteem and enhance cognitive development. In dealing with situations where there is risk to a child, the counselor will find that a team approach accomplishes more for the child than the single intervention of offering counseling.

Counseling the Child

One of the primary purposes of counseling the maltreated child is to provide a safe place and safe relationship within which the child may experiment with new adaptations to a safer world, and in which the child's arrested development may become "unstuck." Counselors cannot literally replace the requisite parental bonding which helps children to grow and develop, but have an opportunity to help the child develop a trusting relationship with an adult.

The key to understanding the maltreated child is to look at the developmental stage rather than the chronological age. The counselor will be able to identify adaptations which the child made to the maltreatment and teach the child more appropriate ways of interacting. Children often reveal in play the traumatic events of their earlier years. They may also show to the counselor maladaptive behavior which puts them at risk of further maltreatment.

In the counseling relationship, working with maltreated children requires many techniques other than talking and listening. Using structured or unstructured play situations and artwork, music or clay provide a safe way for children to release tension and express themselves. Younger children do well with dolls and dollhouses to act out family issues for the counselor. Many maltreated children have not had normal play opportunities and benefit greatly from free play in the counselor's office. Using puppets, reading stories, or acting out role plays are ways in which abused children can try out new approaches to relationships.

Abused children also do well when counselors work with them in groups. Younger children do well with developmental play groups, while older children and youth can benefit from activity groups as well as treatment-oriented groups. Group counseling can be especially useful with children and youth who have been sexually abused by reducing their feelings of shame and differentness and helping them to learn how to protect themselves (McFadden, 1989).

The Counselor's Self-Awareness

Counseling abused children is challenging in that it can arouse many complex feelings within the counselor. Anger with the child's parents, uneasiness over the child's acting out, or feelings of frustration and sadness are not uncommon for counselors to face. Anxiety about protecting the children from further maltreatment may be a predominant theme for the counselor. It is important for counselors working with the sensitive issues of maltreatment to seek consultation, supervision, or even treatment for themselves when they become overwhelmed with feelings. Recognizing one's professional limitations can also be helpful. It is important to remember that counseling alone cannot protect children, and that any effective long-term intervention will require a concerted team approach and a community which cares enough to offer adequate resources for families. Children will be healed and protected as families are helped.

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HIGHLIGHTS
...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Counseling and Guidance Software

Introduction

Computer-enhanced counseling programs offer exciting possibilities in this age of the Information Revolution. While technology continues to leap forward, research literature indicates a gap in resources addressing counselors' computer-relevant needs (Walz & Bleuer, 1989). One critical need is for information about counseling software that is appropriate to the needs of clients and that performs as advertised.

To begin to address this need, the *Counseling Software Guide* (Walz & Bleuer, 1989) was developed. The Guide is a collaborative product of two years and three organizations that continue to provide significant leadership in promoting the use of computers in counseling and human services: the Career/Vocational Education and Guidance Department of the Santa Clara County, California, Office of Education; the ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Personnel Services; and, the American Association for Counseling and Development. The wealth of information contained in this 492-page major reference includes: (l) general information about the use of computers in counseling, (2) practical guidelines on what to look for in software, (3) an overview of trends and developments in the availability and use of software, (4) an overview of the range of software programs available on a particular topic, and (5) information on specific software programs. The Guide includes these other unique features:

- Factual and up-to-date descriptions of over 500 counseling-relevant software programs.
- A large number (93) of intensive software reviews.
- A thorough discussion of how far we have come in the use of computers in counseling and what paths and options the future holds.

Resources in the Appendices include: a complete contact and program address list, a program list with user level and computer compatibility, a software evaluation checklist, and an index of reviewers and programs.

Software program topics include software for: (1) personal counseling, (2) career counseling, (3) academic advising, (4) testing, and (5) administration.

Characteristics of Ideal Counseling Software

Some of the most important characteristics of high quality programs include:

1. Detailed, accurate advice about hardware requirements (e.g., capacity, printer support, type of monitor) and clear instructions on how to install and/or start the program.
2. Compatibility with both IBM PC and the Apple series of computers.
3. Trial use and/or rental options.
4. Frequent revisions and updates provided at no, or minimal, cost to the purchaser.
5. Ability to complete the program, or at least stand-alone segments of it, within a 50-minute time period.
6. Attractive graphics (images and colors).
7. Features that capitalize on the interactive and user-involvement potential of the computer.
8. Ability to back up and change answers and move between sections.
9. Option for printed feedback and the ability to save information.
10. Minimal consequences of errors.

Guidelines for Selecting Software

One of the many ideas suggested in the Guide for selecting software is a simplified three-step process called the **SEP** Approach (See, Evaluate, and Plan). **See** the software for a cursory visual assessment to determine if further consideration is warranted; **Evaluate** the purpose, usefulness, appeal, and cost of the program for your clients; and **Plan** how the software can be incorporated into your program of services. If the software passes the **SEP** test, a professional trial/assessment of the contents is critical, with both counselors and clients.

Price generally parallels complexity and quality of programs; however, check on the company's return policy. If possible, preview the product through exhibitors at professional conventions. Consider also whether it is generative (i.e., allows the client to expand their consciousness to trigger growth) or limited and "canned." Will it enhance the quality of the counseling relationship, or will it interfere with research-proven qualities of counseling effectiveness?

Trends and Developments

Research. As need and implementation increase, further research will be needed on procedures and outcomes. Many program topics (e.g., personal counseling) need further development, matching technique with: (1) medium of presentation, (2) skills of the counselor constructing the materials, (3) training of counselors using the software, and (4) research on specific use of programs.

Quality. The extreme differences in both quality and potential effectiveness demands that the user be alert. Quality factors to signal include theoretical orientation,

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user manual and support, training needed, research, client interaction, technical problems and which need careful scrutiny by the potential user.

Ethical Standards. The integration of computer technology into counseling raises many potential problem areas and ethical issues. The revised AACD Ethical Standards provides ten guidelines for acceptable professional training and service delivery. Counselor educators and practicing counselors should examine their "boundaries of competence" to use computer technology ethically in their services to clients.

Innovations. A significant new development is the proliferation of software programs that are easily understood (e.g., Hypercard, which allows the counselor to focus on needs, not the program language). Voice activation programming will further enhance the trend toward user-friendliness, and with wider acceptance, the price will become more affordable.

Holistic, multidisciplinary computer applications will refine and interrelate the current domains of self-reporting, performance, and psycho-physiological measuring by the computer.

If counselors are to use computers effectively they will need a systematic strategy and comprehensive model for implementing computer applications in counseling and human development service delivery systems.

Progress toward interconnectivity, with all programs running on all machines, makes startling improvements each year, but is yet to be fully realized. Counselor generated programming is an important future step.

Counselors will creatively adapt marketed software to meet client needs.

Compact Disk-Read Only Memory (CD-ROM) players and touch screens are looming on the periphery of counseling software, and many counselors now have access to the hardware necessary to run the programs.

Vertical markets (programs scaled for various levels of competencies) for special groups (e.g., at-risk youth, adult career-changers, the outplaced) will increase.

Future Trends

1. Greater attention will be paid to careful and systematic planning for the use of computers in counseling.
2. Various counseling functions will become increasingly interrelated as a result of the use of computers.
3. Counselors will increasingly demonstrate more imaginative and innovative uses of computers in counseling.
4. Counselors will make regular use of a centralized source of review and evaluation of counseling-relevant software. (Walz & Bleuer, 1989)

Summary

Counseling software programs have proliferated in recent years. Many programs are now duplicative, having been developed largely by technicians rather than counseling professionals. For example, more than a dozen resume-writing programs are currently available. Since good software programs are the result of a team effort, counselors, as users, should develop program ideas with technical staff to produce quality and relevant software. Kid Talk I, Career Finder, and College Finder are good examples of high quality counselor-generated programs which are appropriate to the needs of clients.

Wise counselors of the future will feign neither superiority nor disinterest in this age of the information revolution. They will, instead, proactively develop technological expertise and appropriate content for counseling software programs. Thus, they will contribute significantly to a broad repertoire of "high tech, high touch" effective counseling services, and narrow the gap between the potential of information technology, and available resources addressing counselors' computer-relevant needs.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Counseling Families from a Systems Perspective

In the past twenty years family therapy has become a major innovative force in the helping professions that has profoundly influenced the way counselors think about and intervene in the lives of their clients (Schafer, Briesmeiste, & Fitton, 1984). Systems theory offers family counselors both a conceptual and a practical framework for organizing diagnostic information and evaluating presenting problems.

Generally, the systems perspective views the family as a self-regulating system held together by unspoken rules whose purpose is to maintain itself. Psychological symptoms are viewed as manifestations of a dysfunctional family, and the focus of treatment then becomes the family system, not the problem or symptomatic family member.

Theoretical Models

Numerous theoretical models have been developed, and counseling techniques vary according to the particular theoretical model to which the counselor subscribes. Many therapists are eclectic and use whatever model or techniques seem appropriate for a particular family and treatment setting. These theoretical models include:

Psychodynamic. An object-relations approach to family therapy pioneered by Ackerman (1958) that views dysfunction as the result of inappropriate current behavioral attempts to work out issues of the past.

Generational. Stresses the importance of differentiation, relationships between generations, and triangulation (Bowen, 1978). Therapists function as teachers and coaches.

Communications. Describes pathology as arising out of dysfunctional communication patterns (Bateson, 1972; Jackson & Weakland, 1961; Satir, 1964). Treatment focuses on changing interaction patterns to promote growth, emphasizing conflict management and new adaptive responses to dysfunctional communication.

Structural. Views dysfunction as a consequence of family structure (Haley, 1976; Leibman, Minuchin, & Baker, 1974; Minuchin, S., 1974). Insight comes only after structural change.

Strategic Intervention. A special model of therapeutic change designed by the Ackerman Institute, Jay Haley (1976), and Selvini-Palazzoli (1978), aimed at changing the powerful family rules in families particularly resistant to change. Treatment is brief (eight interviews).

Characteristics of a Dysfunctional Family

A family passes through predictable stages and develops methods of taking care of its members and coping with environmental demands. Members of dysfunctional families can become locked in self-perpetuating pathological patterns during a transition. Common characteristics of such families include the following:

- One or more symptomatic members.
- Blurred generational boundaries.
- Confused communication patterns.
- Overprotection.
- Enmeshment, lack of autonomy or privacy.
- Denial of conflict except as it involves symptomatic member.
- Inability to resolve conflict.
- Submerged tension.
- Scapegoating.
- Low toleration for stress and physical illness.
- Fragmented, disjointed, isolated individuals.
- Noncohesive, noncommittal, pseudo-closeness.
- Schisms, with two or more alliances in conflict.
- Skewed relationships, isolation of one family member.
- Extreme positions by all members in an effort to differentiate.
- Lack of respect for individual differences.

Family dysfunction may seriously interfere with children's developmental processes. Parents in such families are usually immobilized by pain from their past, fear of the present, and resistance to change.

Family Systems Intervention

Indications for Intervention. In general, family systems therapy is appropriate when evidence of family dysfunction exists. A direct correlation should be noticeable between a child's problems and family dysfunction. Families that lack minimal coping skills are not good candidates for family therapy, e.g., families with insufficient structure to attend regular sessions and single parent families with very young children (Schafer et al., 1984).

Therapeutic Attitude. The family systems therapist uses an active, directive manner in which family strengths are affirmed, interpersonal distance is monitored, and reality is reframed. The therapist respects hierarchies of authority and values, supporting subsystems, and speaks the language of the family, attempting to blend in with the family organization and style—to identify with the children without becoming a child, and with the parents without becoming a parent (Minuchin, 1974). It is important to include all family members in the sessions, or at least think in terms of the entire family. Dysfunctional families resist this attitude because it focuses on the family system and not just the symptomatic member. The therapist must respect the power of the family system and work to show members a better way to live together. Too critical an approach can imply that the therapist is trying to destroy the family rather than maintain it. Therapists need to have resolved their own personal family issues if they are to be helpful in effecting change.

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Goals of Family Treatment

Counseling should be initiated with all family members present. Once individuals are thinking in family systems terms, they can become more objective and avoid the emotional reactivity that hinders treatment and change.

Therapy begins with a focus on the presenting problem or the symptomatic family member, with the hope that the family system will reveal itself around these initial issues. The goal is then to introduce family members to a broader way of conceptualizing and experiencing their problems. This approach typically achieves the following:

- Primary problems in family functioning are delineated.
- Scapegoating is neutralized.
- Guilt and blame decrease.
- Empathy for differences increases.
- Family myths and nonfunctional rules are challenged.
- New agreements for living together can be formed.

As the therapist monitors a family's struggle over time, covert rules of family life become overt and the family experiments with different ways of relating, communicating, and living together. Openly discussing issues and exposing family secrets often brings great relief and reduces tension.

Counseling Techniques with Dysfunctional Families

When a family seeks treatment, the initial question for the therapist is what is the problem and what does having the problem do to the family? The family is then assessed as a whole with the therapist observing how members work together, discovering problems other than the presenting problems, and assessing the family's developmental stage cycle (Klimek & Anderson, 1988). In general, the therapist is less concerned with "why" than with "who, where, and what."

Several techniques are useful in helping family members demonstrate how they normally deal with situations. Some examples include:

Sequencing. Ask questions like who does what, when? When kids are fighting, what is mother doing? father?

Hypothetical Questions. Who would be most likely to stay home if mother got sick? Which child can you visualize living at home as an adult?

Scaling Reports. On a scale of most-least, compare one another in terms of anger, power, neediness, happiness.

Family Map. Organize information about the generational development of a family that reveals the powerful transmission of family rules, roles, and myths (Bowen, 1978).

Reframing. Describe negative behavior in different ways. Acting out, for example, can be described as displaced anger from an unresolved family conflict.

Tracking. How does a family deal with a problem. "What was it like for you when. . . ?" rather than "How did you feel when. . . ?" These kinds of questions help keep the focus on the family rather than on the individual.

Sculpting. Create a still picture of the family that symbolizes relationships by having members position one another physically. This technique helps to cut through intellectualized defenses, and gets nonverbal members to express themselves.

Eco-Map. Organize data about the family's total environment and their relationship to it.

Paradoxical Intervention. Instruct a family to do something they don't expect and observe how the family then changes by rebellion or noncompliance. This approach is not appropriate in crisis situations such as violence, grief, or suicide, or for families with minimal resistance. It is reserved for highly resistant and rigid families and is clearly an advanced therapeutic skill (Papp, 1981).

Unbalancing. Support an individual or subsystem at the expense of others. This modifies family structure and introduces the possibility for alternative ways of living together.

Summary

Change in family systems counseling derives from a therapist's affiliation with the family, and from interventions aimed at restructuring the family system in order to transform dysfunctional patterns. New ideas are being formulated about applying systems thinking in different treatment settings, as well as addressing specific problems such as school phobia, delinquency, substance abuse, and a variety of eating disorders. Family systems counseling is seen by some as the ultimate professional challenge and will undoubtedly continue to have a profound impact on the helping professions.

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...An ERIC/CAPS Fact Sheet

Counseling for Study Skills

Rationale

Counseling and guidance professionals are increasingly serving the learning and developmental needs of all students, rather than the therapeutic or remedial needs of a few. In the area of learning, study skills stand at the top of the list along with reading, writing, mathematics and reasoning. In the area of adolescent development, a number of tasks relate directly to academic achievement; for example, studying effectively, producing in work situations under adult performance standards, and establishing a worker identity. Counselors' expertise in these areas thus makes specialized study skills instruction a logical part of the counseling role at all educational levels.

Research

Research and practice have increased our knowledge of how students learn and do not learn. Because problems in academic performance have been found to relate to study skills deficits and to emotional and personal problems, the complex needs of the student with academic difficulties are best served by an interactive learning system consisting of primary strategies (study skills) and support strategies (counseling). Successful study skills programs incorporate this dual approach by including:

- Study skills instruction combined with counseling.
- Group rather than individual counseling.
- High levels of warmth, empathy, and genuineness.
- Skills instruction related to content material.
- Structured rather than unstructured formats.
- Longer programs (ten hours or more).
- Voluntary participation (at the college level).

Assessment

To design a program capable of meeting these complex needs requires information about students' knowledge and use of general and specific study methods, and about personality characteristics which affect learning. A widely used measure of study skills is the Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes (SSHA, by Brown & Holtzman), a 100-item inventory with four scales measuring habits and attitudes: work methods (use of effective study procedures); delay avoidance (promptness in completing assignments and ability to resist distractions); teacher approval (students' feelings and opinions about teachers); and educational acceptance (students' approval of educational objectives, practices and requirements). Another measure is the Student Attitudes Inventory (SAI, by Entwistle), which has 47 true-false items with four scales: motivation, 14 questions; study methods, 14 questions; examination technique, nine questions; and lack of distractions, ten questions.

Measures of learning style provide information for adapting instruction to personal style. Although several instruments are called the Learning Style Inventory (LSI), each refers to a slightly different view of the concept. LSI by Canfield and Lafferty is a self-report instrument for use with junior high school through adult levels based on a rank ordering of choices for each of 30 questions. Administration time is approximately 15 minutes. It can be used to develop instructional materials for a whole class or for individual students. Its emphasis on attitudinal and affective dimensions makes it a useful tool for counseling.

LSI by Dunn, Dunn and Price is a self-report instrument for use with grades 3-12 based on a rank ordering for each of 104 items. Approximate administration time is 30 minutes. An accompanying manual suggests prescriptions to complement selected styles to facilitate academic achievement.

LSI by Kolb is a self-report instrument for young adults based on a rank ordering of four possible words in each of nine different sets. Approximate administration time is 5-10 minutes. Emphasis is on awareness of personal learning style and available alternative modes.

Another measure of personality is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) which can be used as an initial screening device. This measure discriminates between those who tend to improve their academic performance with traditional study skills instruction (judgers) and those who are influenced by the amount of course structure provided (perceivers).

Since study skills deficits are often accompanied by poor test performance, a tool for identifying students whose performance is related to personality rather than knowledge is useful. The Achievement Anxiety Test (AAT, by Alpert & Haber) consists of two parts, the facilitating and debilitating anxiety scales, and can be used for this purpose.

Instructional Content

Specific instruction can be developed at all educational levels from basic skill building themes. They include: (1) locating information — using tables of contents, indexes, reader's guides, dictionaries, thesauri, encyclopedias, almanacs, libraries, catalogues, and computerized information retrieval; (2) selecting information — determining main ideas and supporting detail; (3) organizing information — summarizing, notetaking, determining organizational patterns, listening; (4) understanding graphic aids; (5) following simple and complex oral and written directions; (6) developing reading flexibility; (7) remembering information — studying for examinations; (8) using time wisely; and (9) using effective writing skills.

Reading. Underlining, outlining and highlighting are all standard methods for focusing attention and increasing understanding of written texts. The SQ3R and REAP methods require the additional step of processing information in a tangible way and are also widely used.

The SQ3R technique for reading and studying textbooks involves five steps: (1) Survey — glance at chapter headings, read summaries, determine organization; (2) Question — formulate questions about each section to direct further reading; (3) Read — while reading, actively search for answers to formulated questions; (4) Recite — answer questions without reference to the text; and (5) Review — list major

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subpoints under each heading. Notecards, notebooks and/or tape recorders can be useful adjuncts to this approach.

The REAP reading and study method has four basic steps: Read to discover the message; Encode the message in one's own words; Annotate by writing the message in notes; Ponder the message by processing it through thinking and discussion. Central to the REAP procedure is the process of writing an annotation designed to achieve certain learning objectives. Seven annotation formats have been developed for use with different types of text (summary, thesis, question, critical, heuristic, intention, and motivation).

Notetaking. While fewer systematic hints on how to keep notes have been devised, the 5R's from the Cornell Study Center incorporates the basic processes of effective reading: Record — pick out main ideas; Reduce — summarize, note key terms; Recite — repeat key ideas to oneself; Reflect — think about content; Review — recall and commit to memory.

Test Taking. Instruction in this area involves the following: (1) test preparation — frequent and planful study, adequate rest and diet, blocking out distractions; (2) hints for taking objective and subjective examinations; (3) test wiseness — following instructions, scanning, pacing, reviewing; (4) learning from examinations; (5) managing test anxiety — replacing negative self-statements with positive ones, breathing techniques, progressive relaxation, and desensitization.

Time Management. Common components of time management instruction include: (1) record keeping procedures — daily schedules or diaries to identify habits; (2) schedule planning based on the identified habits and incorporating fixed events; (3) life support activities; (4) leisure time; (5) study time blocked out to allow a commitment for each course; (6) realistic goals for each study session; (7) study breaks; (8) coordination with individual energy periods; and (9) planned use of short time intervals.

Techniques

Behavior modification techniques, which teach people to control their own behavior and change undesirable habits, are readily adapted to individual students and are often applied to infrequent and ineffective studying.

Self-Observation or Self-Monitoring. The learner attempts to observe himself/herself objectively by charting, measuring or counting study behaviors. Equipment can be a simple paper and pencil record or sophisticated computer controlled monitoring. The data serve as a baseline for evaluating change.

Stimulus Control. This technique involves changing the environment. Like all behavior, studying is under some kind of stimulus control, and changing the stimulus will change the behavior. Finding a new, less distracting place to study is an example of this type of environmental change. The knowledge gained from self-observation techniques can help in understanding and changing significant environmental stimuli.

Behavioral Contracts. The learner contracts and administers rewards and punishments based on whether study has been effective or not. The aim of this technique is to increase pre-selected study behavior and reduce undesirable alternatives.

Format

Whether study skills instruction is incorporated into the total curriculum (which is often the case at the middle school and secondary levels) or is a separate course or workshop, a number of formats can be employed:

A combined lecture/peer discussion/practice format focusing on knowledge and use of study skills and emotions allows students to become practiced in active participation in the learning situation, and to overcome anxieties related to academic problems.

Peer tutoring/counseling is an efficient means of providing study skills training to large numbers of students. A successful peer program will require professional supervision, a comprehensive selection process, a good library of study skills books and materials, coordination with counselors and academic advisors or teachers, individual follow-up, and support for the paraprofessional staff.

Programmed and computerized study skills instructions, written instructions and handouts, and audio- and videotapes are also means to reach large numbers of students with the use of fewer personnel. The role of the counselor/instructor in these systems requires assessment, introduction and follow-up, identification of additional resources, and identification and exploration of related personal problems.

The SIP Model

The Study Improvement Program (SIP) offered to second semester college freshmen at the University of Rochester, New York, incorporates the principles suggested here (Malett, 1983, EJ 279 214). In this model, ten paraprofessionals (five men, five women) are selected on the basis of recommendations from staff, faculty, and student leaders; screening interviews, minimum grade point average (2.7, where A = 4.0); and completion of one natural science course.

Training consists of a three-hour seminar once a week (including homework) in basic counseling skills, study skills techniques, and applications to study behaviors of self-control techniques. The seminar format consists of didactic presentations, modeling, practice, and videotaped feedback, with the goal of teaching attending, paraphrasing, questioning, reflection of feelings, interviewing, and related small group discussion techniques. Seminar instructors also model the teaching of study skills and self-control techniques by having the prospective leaders function as a simulated SIP group.

Male-female pairs of SIP leaders conduct the 11 half-hour group sessions comprising SIP. Seven sessions are technique-oriented, directed primarily to teaching behavioral self-control as a study technique, and three sessions are semi-structured discussions of personal factors affecting academic performance. In addition, each group member meets individually with a group leader twice during the semester for a one-hour counseling and problem solving session. The format for individual sessions consists of a review of the previous week's session, formal instruction, practice and homework assignments.

The total 11 sessions are as follows: (1) introduction/self-control techniques; (2) time management; (3) textbook reading efficiency skills; (4) discussion of the importance of grades; (5) stimulus control; (6) test taking and anxiety management; (7) discussion of academic and non-academic pressures; (8) lecture notetaking; (9) discussion of values; (10) writing papers; and (11) problem solving.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Counseling Roles and AIDS

Overview

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a fatal viral disease which suppresses the body's immune system causing increased vulnerability to many other infections. Since 1981, when it was first identified by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), AIDS has become a "modern-day black plague" (Batchelor, 1984). As of March 30, 1987, according to the CDC, 33,482 cases have been reported and 19,394 deaths are known. Forty-eight percent of a representative sample of physicians in private practice have reported seeing at least one case (Ghitelman, 1987). The disease is no longer an isolated phenomenon; it has extended beyond "at-risk" populations and into all communities. Although specialized care units and treatment with exotic drugs have permitted some patients to live more than five years, the prognosis remains poor. Few AIDS victims live longer than eighteen months after diagnosis.

The impact of AIDS occurs in all areas of life--medical, legal, financial, political, and social. Highly controversial and unsolved questions have arisen; for example, what treatment regimes maximize patient care and staff safety? Should children with AIDS attend school? Must "at-risk" populations submit to testing as a prerequisite for purchasing life and health insurance? How much government funding of AIDS research and treatment should be approved?

Despite the controversial and diverse nature of these questions, they involve issues that demand the attention of the counseling community. Medical professionals have indicated that the psychological impact of AIDS on patients and significant others follows a course similar to that of other fatal illnesses and crises (Nichols, 1985). Given this similarity, three roles for counselors are apparent--direct counseling for those affected by AIDS, coordination of support systems, and education.

Crisis Counseling

The steps toward adjustment to and acceptance of any terminal illness or catastrophe often require counseling. Although medical concerns may be addressed by physicians and medical social workers, given the prevalence of AIDS, community and school counselors may find an increase in the number of clients directly or indirectly affected by the disease. Techniques used in assisting individuals with crisis situations may be applied in this environment as well.

Support Systems

In addition to the finality of the prognosis, AIDS victims face social isolation. This is another area in which counselors can help, via establishing networks of support or connecting with existing systems within a community. Counselors can be links between formal therapy (e.g., psychiatric counseling) and community resources. A broader base of support can be supplied through contacts with institutions and organizations that provide services for AIDS victims. Self-help groups are available in some locations. If none exist locally, counselors can be instrumental in establishing them.

AIDS victims also face unique psychosocial concerns that the counseling community can address. The fear and uncertainty that accompanies patient care and prognosis and the potential loss of confidentiality create additional stressors for gay men wishing to remain anonymous (Cassens, 1985), as well as for others not wanting to be associated with "at-risk" populations. Such stress and the individual's inability to cope may negatively affect the body's fight against the virus (Holland & Tross, 1985). Counselors can intervene by assisting individuals in developing appropriate coping techniques and by teaching stress-reducing lifestyles and activities.

For students afflicted with AIDS, school counselors can assist in locating appropriate support groups for both the students and their families. In addition, counselors can function as liaisons while students are absent from school and as sources of continuity at the time of re-entry. Legal issues regarding attendance remain unresolved; recommendations are available from the CDC, but no binding court authority has ruled at this time. Similar counselor involvement has been implemented in some schools for students while in treatment for drug and alcohol problems and at their return. Support groups need not be limited to victims; friends may wish to understand more about the disease, its impact on the victim, and the emotional stress involved.

Education

In an educational role, counselors can "forestall panic and increase rationality and hope" by presenting accurate and up-to-date information about the disease (Kinnier, 1986). Reactions to the AIDS crisis have followed a pattern similar to past life-threatening epidemics. Studies of the black plague, the Boston smallpox epidemic, and yellow fever suggest that initial indications of an epidemic are ignored, then panic displaces rationality. In the process victims are ostracized and the healthy become obsessed (Kinnier, 1986). Providing adequate information can help AIDS victims, the worried well, and the general public through reducing fear and re-interpreting sensationalist stories (Cassens, 1985).

Education is thought to be the key to the battle against AIDS at this time. Seventy-nine percent of the physicians

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polled by *MD Magazine* supported a special high school course dealing with sexually transmitted diseases (Ghitelman, 1987). Community education may be beneficial, too. Making information available about the disease, its transmission, and the procedure and reliability of the test may encourage people to engage in "safe sex" and may decrease the amount of misinformation. "Safe sex" has been defined in a variety of ways. Two common definitions are monogamous relationships and the use of condoms. Neither of these, however, offers any guarantee (Leishman, 1987). Abstention has been recommended by some, but rarely followed. Although education clearly is needed, it is not the cure. Individuals are motivated by more than information and many are willing to take unexplainable risks (Leishman, 1987).

Recommendations

Counselors can play important roles in meeting the needs of AIDS victims. Counseling, networking, and educating are three crucial areas for community and school counselors, psychiatric and psychological therapists, and medical and community social workers. Holland and Tross (1985) make recommendations for health professionals in dealing with AIDS patients that apply to counseling in general:

1. Be aware of one's own attitude toward victims and toward the disease, including the fear of caring for the fatally ill, the fear of contagion, and personal prejudices.
2. Maintain an active, up-to-date file of information about AIDS.
3. Be comfortable in dealing with sexual issues and understand the relationship between these issues and AIDS.
4. Have referral resources available.
5. Be aware of care and social support sources.
6. Be compassionate and sensitive.
7. Direct victim's anger toward non-self-destructive behaviors.

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Telephone Numbers

Public Health Service National AIDS Hotline, operated by the American Social Health Association: 1-800-342-AIDS

National Gay Task Force: 1-800-221-7044

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ERIC DIGEST

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Counseling to Enhance Self-Esteem

Garry R. Walz

Introduction

Reading the newspapers, reviewing professional association conference programs or even watching TV sitcoms will quickly convey the impression that a person's self-esteem is a major determinant of what a person accomplishes and how fulfilled and rewarding a life he or she lives. As one teenager said, "You ain't nothin if you ain't got high self-esteem." This belief in the potency of self-esteem to affect how rewarding our life is, and how productive we are, has clearly been bought into by the public at large, and is a major target of new product development by commercial vendors. An educational publisher's recent catalogue offered twice the number of resources on self-esteem over any other topic. A recent ERIC database search identified over 5,000 journal articles where self-esteem was a major focus of the article.

A person motivated to reach a clear understanding of what self-esteem is and how it can be increased may be puzzled by various definitions and prescriptions for raising it. This digest, therefore, is written with the intention of helping counselors to be a force for positive change in the self-esteem of their clients.

What is Self-Esteem?

Definitions of self-esteem vary considerably in both their breadth and psychological sophistication. From an intuitive sense we know that high self-esteem means that we appreciate ourselves and our inherent worth. More specifically, it means we have a positive attitude, we evaluate ourselves highly, we are convinced of our own abilities and we see ourselves as competent and powerful—in control of our own lives and able to do what we want. In addition, we compare ourselves favorably with others. We also know what it means to experience diminished self-esteem—self-depreciation, helplessness, powerlessness and depression (Mecca, Smelser & Vasconcellos, 1989).

It also may help us in better understanding self-esteem to differentiate self-concept from self-esteem. Self-concept is the totality of a complex, organized and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence (Purkey, 1988). Self-esteem is focused upon feelings of personal worth and the level of satisfaction regarding one's self. Another approach to defining self-esteem is to identify the almost universally accepted components of self-esteem. They are: (1) a cognitive element, or the characterizing of self in descriptive terms, e.g., power, confidence; (2) an affective element or a degree of positiveness or negativeness, e.g., high or low self-esteem; and (3) an evaluative element related to some ideal standard, e.g., what a high school graduate should be able to do (Mecca, Smelser & Vasconcellos, 1989).

Nathaniel Branden provides a particularly compelling view of self-esteem (Branden, 1990). He sees it as having two interrelated aspects: a sense of personal efficacy (self-efficacy) or confidence in a person's ability to think and act; and a sense of personal worth (self-respect) or an affirmative attitude towards a person's right to live and to be happy. In the most succinct terms, self-esteem is the disposition to experience oneself as competent to cope with the challenges of life and to be deserving of happiness.

Why is Self-Esteem Important?

The importance of self-esteem can be considered from several perspectives. First, it is important to normal, psychological development. To adequately cope with the challenges of growing and developing, persons need to believe that they have the capacity to achieve what they need and want to and that they are deserving of happiness and joy in life. Lacking a belief in either of the above, they may be productive in an external sense, but are probably less effective and creative than they would be if they possessed high self-esteem. The effects of self-esteem may also be seen in career planning and decision making. For a person to make a nontraditional career choice, e.g., a female entering engineering, or to go against family desires or pressures requires someone to have a belief in their ability to make appropriate plans and decisions even though important others in their lifespace disagree with them. Registering for advanced placement classes or applying to a highly competitive college may also challenge the self-esteem of an individual. Most people can attest to having experienced times when they were on top, when they were at their "peak performance." These "peaks" in our performance curve illustrate that when people believe in themselves (have high self-efficacy) and believe they can accomplish almost anything, they are expressing a self-esteem which motivates, excites and empowers them. It is this expression of strong self-esteem at a critical juncture in their lives which can help a person to become more of what they are capable of becoming.

It has also been suggested that high self-esteem imparts to a person an immunity to the downturns in the roller coaster of life. Rejections, disappointments and failure are a part of daily life. Life is not always fair or equitable and even our best efforts are not always successful. But high esteem can assist a person in "weathering the storm," to look beyond immediate downward dips.

The current management literature is filled with descriptions of the type of people who will function well in our "information" society. Descriptions of these people are replete with statements regarding the need in an information age for workers who can make independent decisions, take risks, vigorously pursue new ideas and untried approaches, and act on their own initiative. These traits are characteristic of persons with high self-esteem, of those who are confident of their abilities and gain pleasure from acting on them. These traits also assume an economic importance because they lead to more effective and productive employees. Organizations with productive employees are successful in the competitive marketplace and earn greater profits.

Significant Findings

An analysis of the research and scholarly literature suggests a number of significant findings and generalizations about the importance and the effects of self-esteem upon youth and adults. Overall it would appear that self-esteem can be envisaged as a "social vaccine," a dimension of personality that empowers people and innoculates them against a wide spectrum of self-defeating and socially undesirable behavior (California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem, 1990). Among the more compelling generalizations to be made are the following :

1. The family is a strong force in the development of self-esteem. The early years are particularly important in establishing an "authentic and abiding self-esteem" in a person.
2. High parental self-esteem is crucial to the ability to nurture high self-esteem and personal effectiveness in children.
3. School climate plays an important role in the development of the self-esteem of students. Schools that target self-esteem as a major school goal appear to be "more successful academically as well as in developing healthy self-esteem among their students" (California Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem, 1990, p. 5).
4. Self-esteem and achievement may be either the cause or the effect of each other, depending upon the person and the particular situation in which they function.
5. Young girls who possess positive self-esteem are less likely to become pregnant as teenagers.
6. Persons who hold themselves in high esteem are less likely to engage in destructive and self-destructive behavior including child abuse, alcohol and drug abuse, violence and crime.
7. Exclusive attention to just self-esteem or personal achievement may well result in less favorable outcomes in either or both areas than when an approach is used which attends to both self-esteem and achievement. Walz and Bleuer (in press) in postulating the presence of an "esteem-achievement connection" emphasize the importance of presenting students with challenging experiences that enable the student to "earn" high esteem by successfully coping with difficult tasks.
8. The choice to esteem oneself or not is ultimately the responsibility of the individual no matter what the background and prior experiences of the individual may be. High self-esteem can never be given to a person by another person or society. It must be sought, "earned" by the individual for him or herself.
9. Self-esteem may be expressed as an overall generic characteristic, i.e., "she exhibits a high self-esteem" or as a more specific behaviorial attribute, i.e., "he certainly has a high sense of self-esteem in tackling a difficult writing task, but he has absolutely no belief in his competence to do anything numerical." The experience of many counselors would favor a counseling intervention that explores a client's overall self-esteem (enhancing his/her generic self-esteem), but also focuses upon blockages which retard the expression of high self-esteem in specific areas.
10. Writers and researchers show general although by no means complete agreement on the preconditions necessary for someone to demonstrate high self-esteem. Among the commonly used terms are: security, connectedness, uniqueness, assertiveness, competence, and spirituality.

Action Steps for Counselors

Gaining greater knowledge and understanding of self-esteem can be beneficial to a counselor. However, to specifically impact upon a client's self-esteem requires greater focus and effort upon the part of the counselor. Six action steps are suggested as guides for how a counselor can intervene to assist clients in enhancing their own self-esteem.

- Acknowledge that the self-esteem of a client is a vital determinant in his/her behavior and should be a major focus of the counseling relationship.
- Explore with the client the meaning of self-esteem and how his/her self-esteem has impacted upon past behaviors and actions (and can influence present and future plans and decisions).
- Assist the client in assessing the internal and external forces contributing to or retarding their self-esteem. Develop a personally meaningful profile of esteem builders and detractors.
- Recognize that the self-esteem of the counselor has a stimulating or depressing effect upon the esteem of a client and that each needs to be aware of his/her self-esteem and its effect upon others.
- Assist the client in designing a self-esteem enhancement program that is customized to her/his learning style and desired goals.
- Above all else, act upon the conviction that self-esteem is a disposition to know oneself as someone who is competent to cope with the realities and demands of life and as personally worthy of experiencing joy and happiness. Acting upon this conviction a counselor will then know that she/he can neither bestow nor induce self-esteem in another person. Through their efforts, however, counselors can assist a person to learn the processes by which they can examine the antecedents of their self-esteem, and take responsibility for thinking and acting in ways which will heighten their own self-esteem and hence their capacity to experience life confidently and joyously.

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HIGHLIGHTS
...An ERIC/CAPS Fact Sheet

Counseling Youngsters for Stress Management

Stress Points to Bear In Mind

- "Stress is essentially the wear and tear on the body caused by life at any one time." (Dr. Hans Selye, international authority on stress.)
- The secret of healthy stress is to achieve a match between stressors and the individual's current response capabilities. In other words, one person's distress may be another person's challenge.
- Our perception of stressors as excessive or threatening produces a variety of physical symptoms; e.g., increased heart rate, tenseness in the stomach, sweaty palms, headaches, loss of appetite, and insomnia. Emotional effects such as anxiety, depression and hopelessness can result from long-term or diffuse stress, as well as from specific traumatic events.
- Stress management refers to physical and cognitive coping techniques. Examples include: relaxation training (breathing and muscle control); appropriate diet, exercise and rest; non-abuse of drugs and other substances; cognitive restructuring or rescripting (a process of examining our beliefs and changing our silent self-talk); time management; goal setting; biofeedback; guided imagery; and various meditation and yoga disciplines.

Stress in Children and Adolescents

The increasingly complex demands of living in a fast-paced, fast-changing society fall equally upon children, adolescents and adults. In fact, young people may have a harder time because they have even less control of their world. Their adaptive mechanisms and strategies are less well developed, and their homes, schools and communities are run by adults who sometimes forget or minimize the terrors of growing up.

Typical stressors for youngsters include: prolonged absence of a parent, separation, or divorce; change in parent's health or employment; change in family responsibility or income; addition or loss of a sibling; family vacations (or lack of them); loss of a friend; death of a pet; illness and injury; physical growth and puberty; change of teacher or school; changes within the school system, such as in the lunch programs or busing arrangements; academic difficulties and successes; racial or cultural tensions; and peer pressure and developmental issues. Special needs groups may face additional, unique stressors.

While stress responses in young people may be primarily physical, disruptions in thinking/learning and in social relationships are also likely to occur. Test and performance anxiety, lack of concentration, and persistent anti-social or disruptive behavior are some of the most common non-physical manifestations of stress.

Stress Management In Schools

Stress management programs in elementary and secondary schools have been established as part of the health or social studies curriculum and in counselor-led group sessions. Non-curricular stress counseling is also conducted on an as-needed individual basis. The overall goals of these efforts are similar: to help students learn about causes and sources of stress, physiological and psychological reactions to stress, and effective coping techniques. The sessions can also be used to lead students in activities related to decision making, problem solving, responsible self-direction, health management, and interpersonal skill development. In addition to these individual coping measures, systematic approaches are necessary to help identify and reduce stressors in the educational setting.

Relaxation Training for Young People

Learning to relax at will is one of the most valuable stress management techniques because the relaxation response is incompatible with anxiety. In other words, a mind/body condition results that alleviates the usual psychological and physiological stress responses. Moreover, research indicates that relaxation training produces improvement in a number of areas: in students' self-management and self-concept, in creative and other right-hemispheric abilities of the brain, and in certain aspects of achievement. For example, students can learn to reduce test anxious behavior and thus improve the cognitive process. A ripple effect is the improvement of school grades which in time enhances students' self-image and perception of their ability to achieve. In turn, due to the high correlation between self-concept and productivity, school achievement may improve even further.

Implementation of a Relaxation Training Program

Personnel: No extra staff are required to implement a relaxation training program, but an attitude change may be in order. The staff must believe (1) that the student has the potential to learn to control the internal functions of the mind, body, and emotional state; (2) that relaxation training develops an important coping technique, if not a modern survival skill; and (3) that effective use of the skill requires daily practice, especially during the first weeks of learning.

Inservice: The amount of inservice varies with the staff's existing knowledge and skills. Some may need as many as 15 hours of inservice work with both theory and first-hand experience. Others may require little more than orientation sessions on adapting stress management to the needs of young people. Program monitoring after start-up can help identify any additional training needs among the staff.

Time: The amount of time devoted to relaxation exercises is approximately 15-20 minutes once or twice a day. Research shows that youngsters relax more quickly than the average adult, so long periods are not needed. However, specific times for practice (preferably first thing in the morning and immediately after lunch) seem to contribute to greater effectiveness.

Materials: From the variety of techniques that have been developed to induce the relaxation response, several exercise programs have been specifically designed for youngsters and made available on cassette tapes. Exercises that combine autogenic and visual imagery techniques appear to be

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superior, once the meaning of tense and relaxed muscles and the physiological signs of relaxation are understood. Inexpensive biofeedback devices, e.g., wrist temperature and galvanic skin response indicators, may increase motivation to learn the exercises, but the devices are optional.

Basic relaxation procedure for individuals and groups (with or without tapes): Tense each muscle area for about 8-10 seconds and relax for 30-40 seconds. Complete the tension-relaxation phase for each area before moving on to the next, according to the following sequence:

Forehead — raise eyebrows high, relax.
Eyes — squint tight, relax.
Jaw — clench teeth, pulling jaw downward; relax.
Back of neck — push chin down on chest, relax.
Shoulders — press back against chair or floor, relax.
Upper arm — tense the "Popeye" muscle, relax.
Lower arm — clench fist tightly, relax.
Upper torso — tighten rib cage, relax.
Lower torso — tighten buttocks, relax.
Upper leg — lift feet slightly off floor, relax.
Lower leg — point toes toward ceiling with heel on floor, relax.
Feet — curl toes, relax.

During the tension phase, it is important to pay attention to the sensation of tenseness and tightness. During the relaxation phase, the muscles must be totally relaxed. It is helpful to think of words and images that suggest a relaxed state, such as calm, peaceful, or lying on soft, thick grass on a warm, sunny day. There is no "right" way to do the exercises. What is important is the alternation of tension and relaxation with enough time and attention to experience each state and each muscle area separately. With practice, students may have a feeling of disorientation at the completion of the exercises. This indicates a deeper state of relaxation, and they can easily re-orient after a few minutes of sitting quietly.

Sample Stress Management Model for Secondary Students

Introduction. Goal: Understand that stress is a natural response which everyone experiences throughout life. (1) Define the goals of the stress management sessions. (2) Develop an awareness of the variety of ways that our thoughts, activities, and perceptions of environmental events create stress (e.g., start keeping a log of stress-producing events). (3) Define stress, using an illustration of physiological stress and a discussion guide. The goal of the discussion guide is to understand the relationship between stress and various types of life experiences, with the following objectives: (a) differentiate between specific and non-specific responses of the body; (b) demonstrate that from the point of view of stress production, it is immaterial whether the event is pleasant or unpleasant, as the physiological process to restore equilibrium remains the same. (4) Realize that others have similar stressful experiences. This is especially important for young people who are often unaware that most of their peers are having comparable feelings.

Recognition of Stress Symptoms. Goal: Understand that stress reactions appear with a variety of symptoms which vary in nature and intensity according to the force of the stressor and our physical and emotional condition. (1) Develop the ability to recognize individual symptoms in order to initiate appropriate stress reduction behavior. (2) Identify some specific symptoms; e.g., rapid breathing and/or heartbeat, perspiration, lump in the throat, knot in the stomach, trembling hands, shivers and shakes.

Effects of Stress on the Body. Goal: Understand the relationship between stress and the development of physical illness. (1) Delineate the body's stress reaction, culminating in the release of such hormones as cortisol. (2) Describe the implications of an increased flow of cortisol. For example, excess cortisol interferes with the natural production of antibodies and, according to some evidence, may be related to allergies, hypertension, atherosclerosis, and gastric ulcers.

Coping: Stress Prevention/Reduction Lifestyle. Goal: Understand the importance of adopting a pattern of behavior which helps reduce stress. (1) Accept the fact that the way we behave greatly influences the amount of stress we experience. (2) Define specific behaviors which prevent or reduce stress. Examples: develop a "personal success formula" to include meaningful activities; help others; assess one's own level of ability and desire to achieve, and from these develop realistic aspirations; explore the implications of biological inequality, social inequity, and equal opportunity; be positive about the future and recall past accomplishments when faced with seemingly impossible tasks; avoid procrastination; communicate concerns in ways and at times that are conducive to problem solving; and learn to relax.

Coping: Problem Solving. Goal: Understand the importance of a systematic plan to eliminate or greatly reduce the significance of stressors. (1) Analyze the importance of learning rational techniques to help solve problems; i.e., the advantage of logical and sensible solutions over impulsive reactions. (2) Identify major components of a plan to solve a variety of problems. Most plans include the following steps: define the problem; find alternate solutions; test the solutions; evaluate the results; and, if necessary, redefine the problem. (3) Learn to apply the steps, using specific reasons for choosing among alternate solutions and concrete examples of possible consequences for each alternative.

Coping: Quieting Response. Goal: Understand that the Quieting Response (QR) is a practical relaxation technique that reverses the stress reaction and develop proficiency in the technique. Once QR is learned, it can be used at any time within 6-10 seconds without anyone else being aware of it. (1) Learn and practice the following steps: (a) recognize stress (nervousness, pounding heart, etc.); (b) say to yourself, "I can remain calm"; (c) breathe in slowly through imaginary holes in the bottom of your feet; (d) begin to exhale, relax jaw, lower tongue, permit warm air to leave through the imaginary holes in your feet; (e) imagine warmth and heaviness simultaneously with the exhale as warm air descends through neck, shoulders, arms, chest, etc. (2) Analyze why and how QR is an effective stress reduction technique. (3) Compare feelings of tension and relaxation in various muscle groups (as in the relaxation training sequence described earlier); use QR to initiate the relaxation state.

Evaluation. Conduct an evaluation after a lapse of 2-3 weeks; design questions to identify significant student behavior changes in physical, cognitive, and affective areas.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Counselors' Use of Tests: Process and Issues

Counselors use tests generally for assessment, placement, and guidance, as well as to assist clients to increase their self-knowledge, practice decision making, and acquire new behaviors. They may be used in a variety of therapies—e.g., individual, marital, group, and family—and for either informational or non-informational purposes (Goldman, 1971). Informational uses include the gathering of data on clients, assessing the level of some trait, such as stress and anxiety, or measuring clients' personality types. The purpose of non-informational tests is to stimulate further or more indepth interaction with the client.

Although the published literature on testing has increased, proper test utilization remains a problematic area. The issue is not so much whether a counselor uses tests in counseling practice, but when and to what end will tests be used (Corey, Corey, & Callanan, 1984).

Testing Process

Steps involved in the process of using tests in counseling include the following:

- Selecting the test.
- Administering the test.
- Scoring the test.
- Interpreting the results.
- Communicating the results.

Selecting. Having defined the purpose for testing, the counselor looks to a variety of sources for information on available tests. Resources include review books, journals, test manuals, and textbooks on testing and measurement (Anastasi, 1988; Cronbach, 1979). The most complete source of information on a particular test is usually the test manual.

Administering. Test administration is usually standardized by the developers of the test. Manual instructions need to be followed in order to make a valid comparison of an individual's score with the test's norm group. Non-standardized tests used in counseling are best given under controlled circumstances. This allows the counselor's experience with the test to become an internal norm. Issues of individual versus group administration need consideration as well. The clients and the purpose for which they are being tested will contribute to decisions about group testing.

Scoring. Scoring of tests follows the instructions provided in the test manual. The counselor is sometimes given the option of having the test machine scored rather than hand scored. Both the positive and negative aspects of this choice need to be considered. It is usually believed that test scoring is best handled by a machine because it is free from bias.

Interpreting. The interpretation of test results is usually the area which allows for the greatest flexibility within the testing process. Depending upon the counselor's theoretical point of view and the extent of the test manual guidelines, interpretation may be brief and superficial, or detailed and explicitly theory based (Tinsley & Bradley, 1986). Because this area allows for the greatest flexibility, it is also the area with the greatest danger of misuse. Whereas scoring is best done by a bias-free machine, interpretation by machine is often too rigid. What is needed is the experience of a skilled test user to individualize the interpretation of results.

Communicating. Feedback of test results to the client completes the formal process of testing. Here, the therapeutic skills of counselors come fully into play (Phelps, 1974). The counselor uses verbal and nonverbal interaction skills to convey messages to clients and to assess their understanding of it.

Issues in Testing

Confidentiality. The ethical and legal restrictions on what may be disclosed from counseling apply to the use of tests as much as to other private information shared between client and counselor. The trust issue, which is inherent in confidentiality, is relevant to every aspect of testing. No information can be shared outside the relationship without the full consent of the client. Information is provided to someone outside the relationship only after the specifics to be used from the testing are fully disclosed to the client. These specifics include the *when*, *what*, and *to whom* of the disclosure. The purpose of disclosure is also shared with the client and what the information will be used for is clearly spelled out.

Issues of confidentiality are best discussed with the client before conducting any test administration. There should be no surprises when the counselor asks, at a later time, for permission to share test results. Clients who are fully informed, before testing takes place, about the issue of confidentiality in relation to testing are more active participants in the counseling process.

Counselor Preparation. Tests are only as good as their construction, proper usage and the preparation of the counselor intending to use them. The skills and competencies counselors need for using tests in practice are to:

- Understand clearly the intended purpose of a test.
- Be aware of the client's needs regarding the test to be given.
- Have knowledge about the test, its validity, reliability, and the norm group for which it was developed.

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- Have personally taken the test before administering it.
- Have been supervised in administering, scoring, interpreting, and communicating results of the tests to be given.

Supervision in the practice of providing testing services ideally encompasses all of the above areas of concern. This supervision needs to be conducted by a knowledgeable practitioner with experience in using tests in clinical practice.

Client Involvement in the Testing Process. Throughout the process of using tests in counseling, questions about the client's involvement need to be considered. Will the client have a full and equal partnership with the counselor in deciding on the purpose for which the testing will be done? Will the client have a say in selecting the specific test to be administered? Will the client's opinion have a bearing on the interpretation of the test results?

Counseling has developed in recent years into a humanistic partnership in problem solving and growth. Consistent with this development is the client's participation in decisions regarding all aspects of the counseling relationship. Testing needs to be included here. The counselor uses developed counseling skills to determine client readiness for participation in decision making. Counseling skills will also help determine the client's ability to receive and comprehend results from the testing. In this regard, clients need to realize that tests are no more than instruments for furnishing information about themselves, as well as a guide for the counseling process and future decision making.

The issues of client involvement in the testing process are not clear-cut. Individual assessment of client readiness needs to precede test usage. The personal counseling skills of the practitioner are essential to the entire process.

Computerized Testing. Many of the major tests are now available in a computerized format. This format allows the administration and scoring of the test to occur almost simultaneously. Despite the access to computers in testing, clients continue to need a counselor ready to assist in answering questions that may arise. Counselors need to keep in mind that most tests were not normed using a computer format and that this may affect comparisons of individual scores to the available norms.

Ethics. Standards for the ethical use of tests and assessment instruments are given by both the American Psychological Association (APA) and the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD). These standards spell out the considerations to take into account when utilizing tests in practice. It needs to be remembered that the primary purpose of using tests in counseling is the information they will provide to the client. Clients will then be better prepared for making decisions about meaningful changes in their lives.

Conclusion

Confidentiality, counselor preparation, computer testing, and client involvement are all issues within the ethical realm. Ultimately, test use by counselors must be seen as an adjunct to the entire counseling process. Test results provide descriptive and objective data which help the counselor to assist clients better in making the choices that will affect their lives. In order to make the best use of available tests in a counseling relationship, the process of testing and the issues which surround the process must be examined.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Counselors and Computers

Computers in Counseling: A Threat or a Promise?

The Threat: Many counselors fear that computers will mechanize the counseling process, depriving clients of the important ingredients of warmth, empathy, and genuineness characteristic of effective counseling interactions. If counselors try to make computers serve too many or inappropriate functions, this could very well happen. It is imperative, therefore, that the computer be viewed as an extension of, not a substitute for, the counselor.

A second major area of concern is confidentiality. Computers make it possible to collect and store more data on clients for longer periods of time. Many counselors as well as clients fear this may increase the potential for unauthorized access, particularly if the information is stored in the data bank of a large computer network. Further, if the data are not systematically reviewed, it is possible for gross errors to go undetected. To address these problems, counselors and others are advised to (1) limit confidential data to what is appropriate and necessary for the services provided; (2) destroy the data once the value to providing services no longer exists; (3) ensure accurate and complete data; (4) restrict access to confidential data to appropriate professionals through the use of the best computer security methods available; and (5) ensure that it is not possible to identify any particular individual with confidential data accessible through a computer network.

A third area of potential danger is the tendency for clients to interpret the objectivity of the computer as evidence that the information obtained is completely valid and reliable, i.e., the "truth." This can be a problem especially in computer-assisted testing, assessment, and information retrieval. Here, it is imperative that counselors: (1) monitor computer use regularly for potential equipment malfunctions; (2) use computer programs that accurately reflect valid test and measurement principles; (3) critically assess the extent to which computer programs are based on sound counseling and development theories; (4) regularly check and update information; and (5) help clients interpret results in light of other relevant factors.

The Promise: If the safeguards itemized above are observed, computers can enhance and multiply the counselor's activities. This can be accomplished through computer-assisted counseling and or computer-managed counseling. Computer-assisted counseling (CAC) parallels computer-assisted instruction (CAI) and may be defined as an interactive counseling technique in which a computer is used to present information, solicit and monitor responses, and select and present additional information in accordance with individual client needs. Computer-managed counseling (CMC) parallels computer-managed instruction (CMI) and may be defined as the use of a computer to maintain and analyze client data and to document and analyze the counseling process. Computer-managed counseling may also include administrative uses that are not directly related to the counseling process, but increase the amount of time counselors have available for clients.

Computer-assisted counseling. Three significant advantages of computer-assisted counseling are objectivity, availability, and the capacity to store and retrieve large amounts of information. While it can be argued that both counselors and computers can, on occasion, make inaccurate assumptions about particular clients, computers generally treat all clients objectively and are not biased by gender or personal, social, or ethnic characteristics. This objectivity can be very important, whether potential bias is real on the part of the counselor or simply perceived as real on the part of the client.

Where the client-to-counselor ratio is very high, as it is in most schools, computer-assisted counseling can multiply the counselor's efforts by being available when the counselor isn't. As long as clients are adequately prepared to use the computer and receive follow-up help in interpreting results, more clients can receive more information that is often more accurate than can be provided by the counselor in a one-to-one counseling situation.

The tremendous capacity to store and retrieve information is probably the computer's most useful characteristic. If we consider also the computer's speed and ability to select, sort, and combine information, there is no doubt that the computer can accomplish tasks that are humanly impossible.

Among the promising applications of computer-assisted counseling are: selection and retrieval of career information; selection and retrieval of educational information; career guidance; educational guidance; aptitude and achievement testing; interest assessment; test practice/preparation (e.g., SAT); skill building (e.g., problem solving, decision making); and self-assessment.

Computer-managed counseling. Even if computers are not available for direct client use, counselors can use them for clerical and administrative tasks so as to reduce their load of tedious paperwork. This frees them to spend more time with clients. Some counselors fear that the tedious paperwork will simply be replaced by tedious computer work. However, based on the rapidly growing body of literature and the large number of counselors registering for computer-oriented workshops, many counselors are finding that they can become computer-proficient quite easily and that computers do, in fact, allow them to do more in less time.

Another important advantage of computer-managed counseling is the extensive amount of documentation made possible. With computerized record-keeping systems, counselors can now present "hard" data to meet the increasing demands for accountability.

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Among the promising applications of computer-managed counseling are: client/student record-keeping; counseling activity logs; attendance records; scheduling; grading; transcript production; resource files; word processing (e.g., report writing, personalized letters); and academic progress reports.

Designing a Hi-Tech Counseling Program: A Seven-Step Model

1. Analyze your program for potential computer applications. Carefully consider the objectives and outcomes that you desire from a counseling or guidance program, as well as the activities and resources that are required to meet those objectives and outcomes. Are there new objectives or emphases which you would like to see present in the program? Are new resources available which will enable you to supplement present approaches in your counseling and guidance program? Are there activities or services which you are currently providing but which are inefficient? Probably the key consideration in the decision to purchase a computer for guidance and counseling purposes is the area of inadequate services. Rather than making broad sweeping changes that may eliminate those things that you are currently doing well, concentrate on those areas where the outcomes are not adequate either in scope or quality.

2. Investigate available computer resources. A vast array of resources on computer applications and uses is available to the potential user. Computer vendors publish extensive information. A whole new line of computer magazines has appeared; educational journals in the counseling and guidance fields as well as journals about computers used in a variety of educational settings are also available. Software catalogs provide information about the availability and the quality and use of different types of software. Resources in Computer Education (RICE), an online database developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, is a particularly useful resource, providing more than 1500 descriptions of microcomputer courseware for elementary and secondary education. Many states also have low-cost, regional resources for information on computer software. Additionally, ERIC/CAPS has acquired considerable information on software particularly useful in counseling and human services.

Be careful about information overload. It is possible to be so deluged with information and to strive so diligently to obtain the last word, that one is immobilized by an insurmountable body of information on choices and opportunities. Identify a few sources that seem useful and reliable and stay with them.

3. Select computer uses which will meet your program needs. CAC and CMC, as described earlier, are the two basic approaches to use of computers in counseling. Practically all counseling and guidance programs will profit from the use of CMC. Judicious use of the support computers can provide will contribute to the overall efficiency of almost all programs. While potentially offering the greatest impact on service to clients, CAC is more expensive and will require a careful review of the objectives and desired outcomes of your program and the suitability of a computer approach for achieving your aims. In either case, careful thought and planning and low-risk experimentation are highly desirable.

4. Match software to program needs. Frequently, hardware decisions are made before considering whether or not software is available to achieve program objectives and outcomes. Reverse the process—analyze available software and relate it to identified program needs. In particular, go beyond the name of the software and consider who developed it, the evidence for its effectiveness, and how potential users respond to it. A no-obligation tryout or experience with software is very important. Although, in many ways, evaluating software is more difficult than evaluating printed media, we should no more select software based on its cover and advertising hype than we would textbooks or other resources.

5. Match the hardware to the software. After identifying the software you want from available options, you are in a good position to select appropriate hardware. At this point, you are likely to find that the perfect system is impossible to find and that there must be trade-offs. Some systems will meet some criteria, doing some things well, but others very poorly. Thus, it is essential to have clearly identified priorities and objectives before attempting to make a selection.

6. Invest in "personware." The bottom line in the effectiveness of your computer program is the attitudes and skills of the people responsible for its use. Their interest and skill, plus the ability to model the skillful and turned-on user will greatly influence not only the extent to which clients use the computer but also how wisely. In your budget set aside funds to provide both initial and on-going preparation of counseling personnel in the use of computers. Additionally, it is important to provide "play time," or the opportunity to explore the mechanics of the computer and its myriad applications and uses.

7. Implement and evaluate. While thinking about and developing a plan for the use of computers in counseling is important, actual use and the evaluation of its effectiveness are essential. A key to successful implementation is to be prepared for people's resistance and to attend to their technical and affective concerns about computer use. Another important consideration is insuring equity of access and use of computers. If not given adequate emphasis, it is possible that certain groups, such as minorities and women, will not have their fair share in computer programs.

One effective way to win the confidence of those involved in the computer program is to design the evaluation strategy before implementation. All persons concerned with the program should be aware that decisions about the system will be made on reasoned and public criteria. It is equally important to analyze and report evaluation results in a form meaningful to others as soon as possible. Early feedback of even partial results is better than a voluminous final report which appears long after important decisions about the system have been made.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Counselors and Teachers as Student Advisors

Overview

Amid all the recent flurry of state and national reports calling for educational reform initiatives to raise academic standards, add course requirements, require competency testing, and otherwise upgrade the quality of our schools, very little attention has been given to the need for improved guidance and counseling services. Yet effective learning can take place only within a supportive environment, of which developmental guidance is a crucial component.

When students have problems, they turn to those whom they know the best, and who they think can help the most. Surveys have shown that the adults to whom students of all ages are most likely to turn, after their parents, are teachers. A teacher advisor program (TAP) is therefore one very effective way of directly involving teachers in developmental guidance.

Why Do Schools Need a Teacher Advisor Program?

In most schools, there are far from enough school counselors or others specialists to provide a comprehensive program for developmental guidance.

As it is, counselors' hands are normally full as a result of dealing with high-risk students who have special needs or emotional problems, and most other students are lucky if they can gain access to a counselor more than a few times during a school year. Yet all students, especially at the middle school level, need the support of a friendly adult who cares about them personally; someone they can confide in, who can help them deal with the problems of growing up, keeping up with their studies, and planning their careers.

Are Teachers Qualified to Provide Counseling?

Although they may lack the professional training of counselors, school teachers have a long tradition of helping students with personal problems. They also interact with the students daily, and thus are in an excellent position to provide personal direction. In fact, effective teachers share many of the same traits as effective counselors: ability to empathize with students, patience and flexibility, excellent interpersonal skills, openness to new ideas, and awareness of individual differences. Good teachers also habitually promote and sustain positive group interaction in their classes, and develop a helping relationship with both students and parents. In all these ways, the teacher's role is closely allied to that of the counselor.

Elementary school teachers, who work closely with young children in a single classroom, generally accept the idea that developmental guidance is an integral part of their responsibility to students. But middle and secondary school teachers work with a larger number of students and usually spend no more than an hour a day with each class. Because their teaching is limited to specialized fields, they tend to emphasize academic skills, and have little time to spend getting to know their students or talking about students' needs, interests, or problems. Yet adolescents at the middle and high school level need personal attention and guidance as much as, if not more than, young children. A trusted high school teacher is often the student's first choice as someone to turn to in discussing personal problems.

What Would a Teacher Advisor Program Involve?

Teachers, especially in middle schools and high schools, often feel so overwhelmed with their schedules and responsibilities that they do not have the time to build close personal relationships with their students. To be successful, a teacher advisor program must therefore be incorporated as a part of the regular curriculum. One popular approach has been to assign each teacher 15–20 advisees, and to arrange regular "homebase" or "homeroom" periods of 25–30 minutes at the beginning of each school day. The teacher then devotes at least two sessions per week to developmental guidance activities, during which students can explore their personal interests, goals, and concerns with a supportive group of peers. Teacher-advisors also hold regular student and parent conferences and keep track of their advisees' academic progress, consulting with other teachers, school counselors, and support personnel.

What Should Be Included in a Guidance Curriculum?

A developmental guidance curriculum can be structured to include units that focus on the following themes:

- getting acquainted/orientation
- study skills and habits
- self-assessment
- communication skills
- decision-making and problem-solving
- peer relationships
- motivation
- conflict resolution
- personal hygiene and wellness
- career awareness and development
- educational planning
- community involvement

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These units may be organized sequentially according to a school guidance calendar and the major events of the school year. For example, orientation and study skills units would be scheduled early in the year to allow students to get to know the school and one another, and to get off on the right track academically. A self-assessment unit would follow, enabling the students to map out their personal strengths and identify the areas where they need to grow. While some of these topics can be covered in a single class period (such as "getting acquainted"), others can become recurrent focal points for group discussion, such as motivation, conflict resolution, communication skills, and study skills.

Some sessions should be carefully structured to build group cohesiveness or to introduce important developmental concepts. Other sessions should be left open-ended, allowing discussion to focus on students' particular interests and needs.

What Is the Counselor's Role in TAP?

Although some teachers and counselors alike fear that TAP is simply a strategy for getting teachers to take over counselors' work, it is important to emphasize that teacher-advisors can never be a substitute for professional school counselors. Rather, in a well-designed program, the respective roles of teachers and counselors must be clearly identified. An understanding needs to be reached, for example, that teachers will refer students with special needs to counselors, instead of attempting to handle students' complex emotional or behavioral problems on their own.

Teachers can also collaborate with counselors by inviting them to address their classes on special topics; such visits will create a visible bond between teachers and counselors, and thus dissuade students from attempting to play one off against the other. Furthermore, counselors can assist teachers who are having trouble managing their groups by modeling group guidance skills and serving as consultants to the teachers. In fact, counselors often assume leadership roles in TAP, coordinating the teachers and providing resources for them.

Will Teachers Support TAP?

In spite of the advantages of a Teacher Advisor Program, many teachers are reluctant to support such a program, because they are either skeptical about its utility or wary of the extra preparation that such a program would involve. Robert D. Myrick estimates, for example, that in most schools 20% of the teachers would immediately support such a program while 20% would be strongly opposed. It is therefore important to move the middle 60% toward supporting TAP and developmental guidance.

If most teachers are to support a Teacher Advisor Program, they must clearly understand and embrace the essential concepts of developmental guidance underlying the program and the curricular goals. They also need preparation in guidance and interpersonal skills, so that they can effectively facilitate class discussions that help students think about personal problems and explore alternative courses of action.

Second, if a TAP is to be anything more than a formality, the time commitment needs to be adequate. Group meetings of once a week or less are not likely to allow valuable helping relationships between teachers and their advisees to develop, nor do they give teachers the opportunity to establish continuity or consistency. TAP works best when it is scheduled every school day, or at least two or three times a week; otherwise, teachers tend to view TAP as an added encumbrance, peripheral to their major duties.

Besides an adequate allotment of time, TAP also must have a developmental guidance curriculum with clearly articulated objectives, and with supporting materials and activities that can stimulate student participation. If teachers have an organized guidance handbook, which they are at liberty to follow, adapt, or modify as they see fit, they are more likely to "buy into" the guidance program as a whole.

Finally, teachers need to be assured of full support and cooperation from both the administration and the counseling staff, so that they won't feel as if the burden of student guidance has been unfairly shifted to their shoulders. For this reason, TAP should be monitored and evaluated by students, teachers, counselors, and administrators every year to ensure that the program is meeting its goals.

What Are the Advantages and Limitations of Teachers as Advisors?

Teacher Advisor Programs compensate for the high counselor-student ratios that make it impossible for school counselors to know all students personally. But beyond this compensatory role, TAP strengthens teacher-student relationships and creates a supportive learning environment in which teachers and counselors can work together to respond to students' academic and personal needs.

The major disadvantage of Teacher Advisor Programs is that not all teachers are able or willing to work effectively with students in an advisory role. Such programs are therefore often viewed as a passing fad or an infringement on academic time.

To be successful, a Teacher Advisor Program must therefore have a clearly defined purpose, reflected in a well-conceived curriculum, and it must enlist the full support of administrators, teachers, and counselors alike.

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HIGHLIGHTS
...An ERIC/CAPS Fact Sheet

Creativity and Counseling

Creativity — a word that connotes excitement, fun, inspiration, risk, novelty, the unknown, imagination, surprise. A fascinating dimension of mental functioning, creativity has been the subject of intensive research since the the 1960s with the result that we are increasingly able to identify the behavioral factors that are common to unusually inventive individuals, as well as the environmental factors that contribute to creative thinking and creative problem-solving.

Definitions of Creativity

While early scholars focused on the creation, the product of creative efforts, researchers since have studied creativity from other perspectives: (a) the creative process, with fairly discrete behavioral stages; (b) the particular constellation of personality characteristics in the creator; and (c) environmental conditions that promote creative activity.

Experts on creativity (Guildford, 1973) agree generally on the phases a person goes through in the creative process:

1. **Preparation** — acquiring skills, background information, resources; sensing and defining a problem.
2. **Concentration** — focusing intensely on the problem to the exclusion of other demands — a trial and error phase that includes false starts and frustration.
3. **Incubation** — withdrawing from the problem; sorting, integrating, clarifying at an unconscious level; often includes reverie, relaxation, solitude.
4. **Illumination** — the Aha! stage, often sudden, involving the emergence of an image, idea, or perspective that suggests a solution or direction for further work.
5. **Verification, elaboration** — testing out the idea, evaluating, developing, implementing, convincing others of the worth of the idea.

These stages are not necessarily distinct and usually involve a complex recycling of the process.

Torrance (1969) defines creativity broadly as the process of sensing a problem, searching for possible solutions, drawing hypotheses, testing and evaluating, and communicating the results to others. He adds that the process includes original ideas, a different point of view, breaking out of the mold, recombining ideas or seeing new relationships among ideas. Moving the focus to the behavioral perspective, Torrance describes four components by which individual creativity can be assessed:

1. **Fluency** — the ability to produce a large number of ideas.
2. **Flexibility** — the ability to produce a large variety of ideas.
3. **Elaboration** — the ability to develop, embellish, or fill out an idea.
4. **Originality** — the ability to produce ideas that are unusual, statistically infrequent, not banal or obvious.

From still another viewpoint, creativity is perceived as three-dimensional (Khatena, 1982), consisting of the person, the environment, and the cosmos — this last component to include the suprarational forces that illumine creativity at the highest or genius levels.

Characteristics of the Creative Person

According to the most extensive research in this field, creative people possess in quantity the abilities identified by Torrance: sensitivity to problems and deficiencies; ability to produce many, varied, and unusual ideas; ability to flesh them out; and ability to perceive in a way different from the traditional or established method. In addition, highly creative people share the following traits: flexibility rather than rigidity, openness to new ideas and experiences, tolerance of ambiguity, a wide range of interests, curiosity, enthusiasm and energy, vivid imaginations, playfulness, commitment and concentration, comfort with change, capacity for hard work, persistence, divergent thinking. Because creativity involves new approaches and the production of something new and untried, it also involves the risk of failure. It follows logically, then, and is supported in the literature, that two characteristics of the creative person are particularly significant: self-confidence, based on a strong self-concept; and independence, the strength to hold fast against disagreement or resistance by others and the courage to persist when others may be threatened by a new idea or discovery.

Research Approaches to Creativity

When researchers attempt to measure this capacity, they must first "index" creativity, that is, decide what they mean by creativity, what dimensions are accessible for identification, and whether these can be operationalized to the extent that they can be measured. Four broad approaches to the assessment of creativity prevail (Lesher, 1973): assessment of the product, the process, the person, and the environment.

1. **Assessment of the product.** Difficulties in this type of assessment include establishing norms or criteria by which to judge the uniqueness of the product; making decisions on ruling out the absurd (time may later accept as creative what may today seem to be absurd); generalizing from one sample of output. The Jackson and Messick (1967) conceptualization does provide a way in which different criteria can be compared.
2. **Assessment of the process.** This has taken two forms: interviewing the creative person to determine attitudinal "sets," and examining facets of the process. Difficulties include standardization of the interview form and the responses, the tendency for interviewees to give desired rather than true responses on self-report forms, pinpointing the definition of creativity to avoid variability in observer

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judgments, bias in favor of a person's background and exposure to the field in performing certain tasks well rather than the measurement of innate creative ability, avoidance of a "test" atmosphere, time required for hand-scoring, reliability of scorers, assessment of a narrowly defined ability, reliance on language or verbal skills. "The Torrance Tests of Creativity" (Torrance, 1966), one of the most well-known and widely-used instruments to measure the creative process, contains a verbal and a figural part. Each is scored on the four criteria of fluency, flexibility, elaboration, and originality. Like the TTOC, the Wallach and Kogan (1965) creative battery includes both verbal and visual content and is administered without time constraints and in a game-like atmosphere. Also used in this domain is the Remote Associates Test (Mednick & Mednick, 1962).

3. **Assessment of the person.** Difficulties include the likelihood of distortion on self-report forms from dishonesty, desire to give the "correct" answer, or lack of personal insight; need for cooperative subjects; applicability to young age levels; and difficulties between scores in group and individual assessment situations. One of the most frequently used tests for measuring personality traits is the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire, which appears to yield fairly reliable data. Researchers found that several groups of creative people exhibited similar profiles and characteristics on this instrument.
4. **Assessment of the environment.** Difficulties in assessing background information include people's tendency to remember selectively, establishing a control group, and insensitivity to current, ongoing change. The Alpha Biographical Inventory, a 300-item survey which covers areas of family life, developmental history, academic background, and adult life and interests, has proved to be worthwhile as a measurement of environment and a predictor of future creative output.

Generally speaking, researchers agree that students enrolled in courses designed to stimulate creative ability do improve in at least some of the creative abilities being tested, that performance on creative tests can be improved by the use of reward and specialized training, that early family responsibilities and opportunities for independent action encourage creative achievement, that educational experiences are decidedly influential in fostering or suppressing creative potential, that creativity training programs in schools are more effective when teacher involvement is high, that creativity is associated with good mental health.

Blocks to Creativity

Several forces in the groups to which we belong — schools, companies, churches, lodges, corporations — can help or hinder our creativity in various ways.

1. **Fear of failure** — a reward structure that may penalize failure or provide excessive rewards for success, press for immediate success, preference for routine and predictability.
2. **Preoccupation with order and tradition** — excessive reverence for the past.
3. **Resource myopia** — failure to recognize one's own strengths as well as the strengths of other people, lack of appreciation of and trust in human capacities.
4. **Overcertainty** — persistence in behavior that is no longer effective, dogmatism and inflexibility on the part of experts in the group.
5. **Reluctance to exert influence** — desire not to appear pushy, a "don't rock the boat" attitude.
6. **Fear of play** — overseriousness, desire not to appear foolish, squelching of What if? thinking and fantasizing.

We also may experience inhibitors within ourselves. Eminent creative persons and others who have studied the creative thinking process report the following as being among the most common difficulties encountered in attempting to produce original ideas (Torrance, 1969):

1. Inability to let the imagination roam, to play.
2. Tendency to analyze rather than synthesize.
3. Movement toward too-soon closure.
4. Inability to abandon an earlier image.
5. Distractions from others.
6. Lack of a rich background of information and experience.
7. Preoccupation with private worries.
8. Running out of ideas.

Integration of Creativity Into Counseling

The following creative approaches, when used in the counseling process, can help clients do two things: (1) produce more creative outcomes in decision-making, and (2) use creative processes in planning and goal-setting.

1. **Futurization** — helping people to move away from the present and examine their situation from a futuristic point of view, to open their minds to divergent thinking and possibilities they may not have thought of.
2. **Imagery** — helping people to put themselves into a situation, imagine being there, experience various outcomes; allowing for an incubation period when ideas can have a chance to sort themselves out and recombine in creative ways.
3. **Suspended judgment**— helping people postpone evaluation, which keeps the mind open to new possibilities and options and consideration of alternatives.
4. **Multiple options and choices** — helping people avoid settling on a single choice, expand their options, do some contingency planning.
5. **Whole person resources** — helping people combine logic and rationality with gut-level emotions and feelings in making decisions, pushing less hard for answers, providing more support for What if? responses, for fantasizing and dreaming.
6. **Modeling creative behavior** — allowing people to be independent, letting them experience mistakes, avoiding evaluation, being flexible, rewarding creative behavior, understanding the creative process.

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Creativity in Young Children

James D. Moran III

The precursors of adult creativity are clearly evident in young children. This digest explores factors that affect creativity in children and techniques for fostering this quality. The need to study creativity, and the definition of creativity within a developmental framework, are also discussed.

Why Study Creativity in Young Children?

Just as all children are not equally intelligent, all children are not equally creative. But just as all children exhibit behaviors which evidence intelligence from birth, they also exhibit behaviors which evidence the potential for creativity.

Creativity is essentially a form of problem-solving. But it is a special type of problem-solving—one that involves problems for which there are no easy answers: that is, problems for which popular or conventional responses do not work. Creativity involves adaptability and flexibility of thought. These are the same types of skills that numerous reports on education (e.g., the Carnegie Report, 1986) have suggested are critical for students.

What Is Creativity?

Creativity has been considered in terms of process, product or person (Barron and Harrington, 1981) and has been defined as the interpersonal and intrapersonal process by means of which original, high quality, and genuinely significant products are developed. In dealing with young children, the focus should be on the process, i.e., developing and generating original ideas, which is seen as the basis of creative potential. When trying to understand this process, it is helpful to consider Guilford's (1956) differentiation between convergent and divergent thought. Problems associated with convergent thought often have one correct solution. But problems associated with divergent thought require the problem-solver to generate many solutions, a few of which will be novel, of high quality, and workable—hence creative.

For a proper understanding of children's creativity, one must distinguish creativity from intelligence and talent. Ward (1974) expressed concern about whether creativity in young children could be differentiated from other cognitive abilities. More recent studies (for example, Moran and others, 1983) have shown that components of creative potential can indeed be distinguished from intelligence. The term "gifted" is often used to imply high intelligence. But Wallach (1970) has argued that intelligence and creativity are independent of each other, and a highly creative child may or may not be highly intelligent.

Creativity goes beyond possession and use of artistic or musical talent. In this context, talent refers to the possession of a high degree of technical skill in a specialized area. Thus an artist may have wonderful technical skills, but may not succeed in evoking the emotional response that makes the viewer feel that a painting, for example, is unique. It is important to keep in mind that creativity is evidenced not only in music, art, or writing, but throughout the curriculum, in science, social studies and other areas.

Most measures of children's creativity have focused on ideational fluency. Ideational fluency tasks require children to generate as many responses as they can to a particular stimulus, as is done in brainstorming. Ideational fluency is generally considered to be a critical feature of the creative process. Children's responses may be either popular or original, with the latter considered evidence of creative potential. Thus when we ask four-year-olds to tell us "all the things they can think of that are red," we find that children not only list wagons, apples and cardinals, but also chicken pox and cold hands.

For young children, the focus of creativity should remain on process: the generation of ideas. Adult acceptance of multiple ideas in a non-evaluative atmosphere will help children generate more ideas or move to the next stage of self-evaluation. As children develop the ability for self-evaluation, issues of quality and the generation of products become more important. The emphasis at this age should be on self-evaluation, for these children are exploring their abilities to generate and evaluate hypotheses, and revise their ideas based on that evaluation. Evaluation by others and criteria for genuinely significant products should be used only with older adolescents or adults.

What Affects the Expression of Creativity?

For young children, a non-evaluative atmosphere appears to be a critical factor in avoiding what Treffinger (1984) labels as the "right answer fixation." Through the socialization process, children move toward conformity during the elementary school years. The percentage of original responses in ideational fluency tasks drops from about 50% among four-year-olds to 25% during elementary school, then returns to 50% among college students (Moran et al., 1983). It is important that children be given the opportunity to express divergent thought and to find more than one route to the solution.

Rewards or incentives for children appear to interfere with the creative process. Although rewards may not affect the number of responses on ideational fluency tasks, they seem to reduce the quality of children's responses and the flexibility of their thought. In other words, rewards reduce children's ability to shift from category to category in their responses (Groves, Sawyers, and Moran, 1987). Indeed, any external constraint seems to reduce this flexibility. Other studies have shown that structured materials, especially when combined with structured instructions, reduce flexibility in four-year-old children (Moran, Sawyers, and Moore, in press). In one case, structured instructions consisted only in the demonstration of how to put together a model. Teachers need to remember that the structure of children's responses is very subtle. Research suggests that children who appear to be creative are often involved in imaginative play, and are motivated by internal factors rather than external factors, such as rewards and incentives.

How Can Adults Encourage Creativity?

- Provide an environment that allows the child to explore and play without undue restraints
- Adapt to children's ideas rather than trying to structure the child's ideas to fit the adult's.
- Accept unusual ideas from children by suspending judgement of children's divergent problem-solving.
- Use creative problem-solving in all parts of the curriculum. Use the problems that naturally occur in everyday life.
- Allow time for the child to explore all possibilities, moving from popular to more original ideas.
- Emphasize process rather than product.

Conclusion

Adults can encourage creativity by emphasizing the generation and expression of ideas in a non-evaluative framework and by concentrating on both divergent and convergent thinking. Adults can also try to ensure that children have the opportunity and confidence to take risks, challenge assumptions, and see things in a new way.

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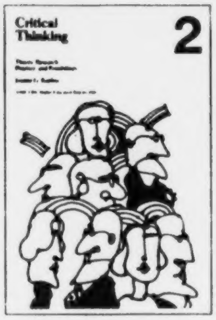

Executive Summary

ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report 2, 1988

Critical Thinking

Theory, Research, Practice, and Possibilities

Joanne Gainen Kurfiss, University of Delaware

Most colleges and universities aspire to produce graduates who think critically, who can make judgments in complex situations on the basis of sound reason, adequate evidence, and articulated values. Why, then, does criticism such as that of Allan Bloom in *The Closing of the American Mind* strike such a responsive chord with the American public? Is it true, as the subtitle of Bloom's book proclaims, that "higher education has failed democracy and impoverished the souls of today's students"?

Bloom's sweeping claim does not lend itself well to empirical validation or disconfirmation (Bloom himself disdains empiricism as a path to truth). Nonetheless, theoretical and empirical studies of students' intellectual development are helpful in addressing such questions as What is critical thinking? How does it develop? What role does knowledge play in critical thinking? Do educational practices affect the ability to think critically? This report surveys theory, research, teaching practice and institutional programs pertinent to these questions.

Does Higher Education Promote Critical Thinking?

Three perspectives dominate current literature on critical thinking and its development in college: argument skills, cognitive processes, and intellectual development.

Argument skills: Introductory courses on critical thinking teach students to detect and avoid fallacious reasoning and to analyze deductive and inductive arguments. These courses are grounded in informal logic, a branch of philosophy. Argument skills improve modestly with college experience (McMillan, 1987), but education has only a minor effect on the depth of students' arguments on everyday issues (Perkins, 1986). This may be because subject matter knowledge is more important in critical thinking than generic knowledge of how to analyze arguments (McPeck, 1981). Or it may be because students are unable to make use of knowledge that is in fact available to them (Perkins, 1986).

Cognitive processes: Cognitive psychologists study the organization of knowledge in memory and its role in tasks such as reading, writing, and problem solving. In cognitive terms, critical thinking is problem solving in situations where "solutions" cannot be verified empirically. Confronted with a complex issue, the learner constructs a representation or mental model of the situation; the model is organized around a claim or thesis and supported by reasoning and evidence.

Three kinds of knowledge interact in developing a model: (1) *declarative knowledge*, knowing the facts and concepts in the discipline; (2) *procedural knowledge*, knowing how to reason, inquire, and present knowledge in the discipline; and (3) *metacognition*, cognitive control strategies, such as setting goals, determining when additional information is needed, and assessing the fruitfulness of a line of inquiry.

Experts draw on an extensive network of hierarchically and causally organized declarative knowledge relevant to problems in their field. In addition, they use metacognition and the reasoning procedures of their discipline; however, their use of these cognitive processes is so automatic that they may be unaware of the skill that underlies their performance.

Students acquire considerable declarative knowledge in their college courses. Their knowledge, however, may not be effectively organized for solving particular problems. Moreover, procedural knowledge is rarely taught (in part because it is tacit knowledge for professors), and many students' metacognitive skills are poorly developed. As a result, students may not draw upon the full extent of their knowledge when called upon to complete assignments that require critical thinking.

This report summarizes cognitive research on thinking in various disciplines, and describes courses that foster critical thinking in the disciplines. Many of these courses explicitly teach discipline-specific procedural knowledge and build metacognitive processes into instructions for assignments and class activities.

Intellectual development: While cognitive researchers focus on learners' discipline- or even task-specific knowledge of complex issues, the developmental approach traces transformations in students' beliefs about the nature of knowledge and truth. A major developmental task for college students is discovering and reckoning with the loss of singular truth and ultimate authority.

Many people assume that knowledge consists of objective facts possessed by authorities. When students encounter pluralism, complexity, and uncertainty in college courses, they interpret it as "subjectivity." They proclaim than when "facts" are now known, all opinions are equally valid. This view (called "multiplicity" or "subjective knowledge") is similar to the excessive "openness" deplored by Allan Bloom. Several developmental studies support Bloom's contention that students view knowledge as "purely" subjective.

Persistent attention to the justification of belief helps students progress to the view that opinions are knowledge claims, have stronger or weaker grounds, and that their merits can be discussed (though perhaps not agreed upon) within a particular intellectual community. The final developmental task is to make rational, caring commitments in a relativistic world. For many educators, it is the mature epistemology of commitment, not isolated analytical skills, that is the true aim of instruction for critical thinking. Developmentally effective instruction *challenges* students to confront the indeterminacy of knowledge at the level just beyond their present understanding, and *supports* them by affirming what they have already achieved (Belenky et al 1986).

What Can Educators Do to Foster Critical Thinking?

This report describes numerous examples of programs and courses that successfully integrate critical thinking with content learning in many disciplines. Many of these projects overcome students' reluctance to tackle challenging assignments by connecting themes, values, and modes of inquiry in the discipline with experiences and questions that are meaningful in students' lives (Gamson 1984; Loacker et al 1984). These courses do not neglect "content" in favor of "process." Rather, they require students to *use* content in projects that require critical thinking. Students' initial attempts are recognized as the work of novices, to be developed and refined as their base of declarative and strategic knowledge grows. Teachers in such courses often use structured small group work in which students clarify concepts, explore complex problems, debate issues, and get help on works in progress.

Fostering all students' critical thinking abilities and intellectual development requires the participation and support of faculty in every discipline. Institutional approaches in use currently include freshman-year programs, cross-curricular models, and assessment-based strategies. To build support for institutional cooperation, campus leaders often survey faculty, employers or alumni, or conduct a formal assessment of thinking skills, then create a forum for discussion and interpretation of the results. Once courses or programs are established, administrators must recognize that faculty who are experimenting with new teaching methods and skills need support in the form of resources, time, training, and encouragement. Supportive administrators often find that teaching for thinking is an important source of faculty vitality, renewal, and collegiality (Gamson 1984).

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OVERVIEW

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DETERRENTS TO PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATION

Unlike its childhood counterpart, adult education is mainly a voluntary activity. The fact that only some adults engage in educational activities would be of little consequence were it not for the needs and expectations of society. However, changing socioeconomic, cultural, and demographic forces as well as the democratic ideal of equal opportunity cause educational nonparticipation among adults to be treated as a social issue.

This *Overview* examines existing models and theories that attempt to explain participatory behavior. Types of barriers or deterrents that hinder participation are described. Finally, general guidelines and specific examples of successful approaches to stimulating participation offer strategies to address deterrents to adult education. In this context, a deterrent to participation is defined as a reason or group of reasons contributing to an adult's decision not to engage in learning activities (Scanlan 1986).

Theoretical Foundations

Early attempts to explain why adults participate or fail to participate in education considered the potential impact of changes in life circumstances upon participatory behavior. Educational activity was seen as the interplay between personal needs and social structures. When both needs and social structures drive a person toward an educational objective, the likelihood of participation should be high.

Three recent approaches attempt to combine dispositional, situational, and environmental factors into composite models of participation. First, Rubenson's (1977) Recruitment Paradigm emphasizes the perceptual components of the individual's lifespace. That is, actual experiences, needs, and environmental factors are less important in determining behavior than how they are perceived and interpreted by the potential learner. Cross' (1981) Chain-of-Response Model conceives of participation as a result of a complex chain of responses originating within the individual. Internal psychological variables such as self-concept and attitude toward education are critical determinants of prospective learners' decision making.

The third recent formulation, Darkenwald and Merriam's (1982) Psychosocial Interaction Model, illustrates participatory behavior as determined by a continuum of responses to internal and external stimuli. The degree of probability of participation is affected by such variables as socioeconomic status, perceived value of participation, readiness to participate, and barriers to participation.

These theories and models imply that a variety of variables are associated with participatory behavior. A number of researchers have explored the influence of such demographic variables as age, sex, income, race, educational attainment, employment status, and geographic location. Nondemographic variables affecting participation are categorized as situational—associated with individual life circumstances, particularly in terms of career and social roles; dispositional—associated with values, attitudes, beliefs, or opinions; or psychological—associated with individual psychological or personality traits.

Categories of Deterrence Factors

However, the research evidence shows that these demographic and nondemographic variables of and by themselves are not deterrents to participation. Instead, these research findings demonstrate that (1) "deterrents" is a multidimensional concept, encompassing clusters of variables; (2) these variables are influenced by prospective learners' perceptions of their magnitude; and (3) the impact of these variables on participation behavior varies according to individual characteristics and life circumstances.

Synthesis of these findings suggests the following categories of deterrence factors (Scanlan 1986):

- Individual, family, or home-related problems
- Cost concerns
- Questionable worth, relevance, or quality of available educational opportunities
- Negative perceptions of the value of education in general
- Lack of motivation or indifference toward learning
- Lack of self-confidence in one's learning abilities
- A general tendency toward nonaffiliation
- Incompatibilities of time and/or place

Strategies to Address Deterrents

The multiple factors deterring participation and their differential impact mean that a number of different approaches are needed to encourage adult involvement in educational activities. General guidelines for addressing deterrents include the following (Cross 1981):

- Ways of overcoming the powerful deterrents of poor self-concept and negative attitudes toward education include providing educational opportunities with low levels of risk or threat, reinforcement of self-concept, more positive personal experiences early in the educational career, and the support of adults' significant others.
- Situational and institutional deterrents can be addressed by administrative accommodations (alternative scheduling, extended hours for counseling), student services (transportation, child care), and distance teaching.
- Effective communication of accurate, timely, and appropriate information about educational opportunities must be targeted to the particular needs, expectations, and concerns of the intended audience.

Marketing Educational Services

Traditional marketing concepts can also be applied to reach hard-to-reach learners. Marketing can be a proactive means of

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attending to the multiple variables affecting participation and the differential impact of these factors on various groups.

The first important process in marketing is market analysis (Beder 1980). Components of this process are (1) market segmentation—dividing potential participants into categories based on similar needs and expectations; (2) clientele analysis—assessment of attitudes, values, and perceptions and determination of the demand for programming; and (3) assessment of the competition—analysis of the various opportunities and options available to prospective learners.

The second major component of marketing, program orchestration (Beder 1980), is achieved by establishing the appropriate marketing mix of price, product, place, promotion, and partners.

Price. In terms of participation, program fees represent only one element of price. Hidden costs such as food, travel, childcare, materials, and the opportunity cost of loss of income must be considered.

Product. In addition to perceptions of the tangible (course, program, etc.), participation is affected by consideration of the activity's total meaning to prospective learners—the augmented product.

Place. Inaccessibility, cost, and previous negative experiences in a school environment are deterrents that make selection of the location of educational activities a crucial factor.

Promotion. Information about educational opportunities must also be designed to change negative attitudes, enhance motivation, and provide value-added incentives such as stipends for job trainees or continuing education units for professionals.

Partners. Joint sponsorship and interagency referral and cooperation can help alleviate situational and institutional barriers.

Successful Program Approaches

The application of these strategies for overcoming deterrents among different groups of hard-to-reach learners is illustrated in this section.

Entry Women

The major factors deterring reentry women from pursuing education include poor self-concept, home-related problems, lack of awareness, cost, and incompatibilities of time and place. Programs successful in helping reentry women prepare for career or life transitions treat education as only one need among many. Planning for this group should focus on raising self-esteem, developing autonomy, helping women cope with role conflict and discrimination, providing support services like child care, and establishing a learning environment free of threat and considerate of the influence of prior socialization.

The Elderly

Among the deterrents most likely to hinder the elderly are personal (particularly health) problems, questionable relevance of programming, cost, accessibility, and social nonaffiliation. This requires programming that is (1) direct, establishing linkages with the elderly community; (2) personal, providing a supportive environment attendant to individual needs and sensitive to physiological and psychological effects of aging; and (3) accessible, paying attention to physical comfort, transportation needs, and scheduling concerns.

The Educationally Disadvantaged

The predominant barriers hindering the participation of this group are lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem, and negative attitudes toward education, compounded by language or literacy problems. Recruitment should focus on community-based strategies, identifying problems important to the community. Personal contact (such as door-to-door and word-of-mouth recruiting) and use of existing social networks can influence these prospective learners' dispositions toward learning.

Rural Adults

Inaccessibility, lack of support services, cost, and job and family conflicts often deter rural adults from participation. Successful rural adult education must be considered an integral part of overall rural development, providing advisement, counseling, and support services appropriate for the surroundings. The Cooperative Extension Service, a model of successful rural adult education, places heavy emphasis on use of local resources, facilities, and networks and solution of practical problems of immediate concern to its constituency.

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ERIC Digest

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DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP IN GIFTED YOUTH

Leadership Development and Gifted Students

All cultures need role models and leaders. Most of us agree that professions such as medicine, technology, education, business and industry, politics, and the arts need people who can use intelligence, creativity, and critical judgment. The role of parents and educators is critical in assisting with the development of leadership attitudes and skills in gifted youth.

Leadership has been designated a talent area in federal and state definitions of gifted students who require differentiated programs, yet it remains the least discussed of the curricular areas for these students in the literature, and it is not well defined.

Characteristics of Leadership in Gifted Youth

Few gifted programs identify students with high leadership potential or incorporate leadership education into their curricula. However, many characteristics of gifted youth enable them to profit from leadership development. Those characteristics include the following:

- The desire to be challenged.
- The ability to solve problems creatively.
- The ability to reason critically.
- The ability to see new relationships.
- Facility of verbal expression.
- Flexibility in thought and action.
- The ability to tolerate ambiguity.
- The ability to motivate others.

Parents and the Development of Leadership

Preparing young people for leadership responsibility begins in the home with an enriched environment that offers opportunities for children to acquire broad interests, self-esteem, and the insights and skills that characterize leaders. Parents can provide their children with support and encouragement as they participate in a wide variety of home and community activities. Parents should encourage their children to be involved in the selection, planning, execution, and evaluation of family activities ranging from a day at the zoo to a vacation overseas. Youngsters should also be encouraged to plan, initiate, and complete a variety of self-evaluated individual projects, but these skills are not learned automatically. They must be patiently taught and modeled by parents in the home.

Discussion and debate about current events and other topics foster independent thinking and nurture leadership potential. Parents who listen openly and thoughtfully without expecting children to embrace their social, political, and economic views are demonstrating leadership characteristics. Mutual respect, objectivity, empathy, and understanding are highly valued by gifted young people, particularly those who need a safe place to test their ideas.

Opportunities for decision making at an early age will help to foster the critical reasoning skills necessary to be an effective leader. Inappropriate decisions by children and youth, although difficult for parents to accept, may enhance future decision-making skills when self-evaluated.

Infusing Leadership Concepts and Skills Into the Curriculum

Major emphasis should be placed on leadership development in all academic areas, including the fine and performing arts. Thematic curriculum units and reading lists should include biographies and autobiographies of outstanding leaders. Students should be encouraged to analyze and evaluate the motivation, contributions, and influences of each leader and assess the leadership styles employed. Major events and family and other influences important in the life of each leader should be emphasized.

Sciences. Physical and biological sciences, mathematics, and social sciences provide unique opportunities for projects in which initiating, planning, critical thinking, creative problem solving, and decision making can be developed. They are rich with opportunities to learn about leaders who have influenced such areas as government and politics, science and technology, humanities and the arts, business and industry, philosophy and religion, and health science and medicine. Students can learn how their interests, passions, and abilities can develop into careers. They can compare the contributions of others with their own value systems. For example, many leaders have been concerned about poverty and the human condition.

Humanities. Language arts, speech, English, and other courses that emphasize oral and written communication provide opportunities for potential leaders to learn how to present ideas clearly and persuasively. Preparing and presenting speeches, listening to and critiquing presentations, writing news reports and editorials for school and other local publications, preparing for and engaging in debates, leading conference and discussion sessions, and participating in school and other election campaigns are only a few of the many options available. Group activities provide opportunities for young people to learn how to help others feel important and valued, accept their contributions, keep discussions relevant, and occasionally follow rather than lead.

Arts. Students can learn leadership skills and gain inspiration from talented people of the past and present who have enriched all of us through their contributions in the fine and performing arts. Their creative works, the trends they initiated, and the enduring results of their efforts are worthy of study, as are their lives and the circumstances under which their work came to fruition.

Other School Options for Leadership Development

Several strategies strengthen and broaden educational experiences for gifted youth. Instructional units on leadership development should be provided at each grade level in a resource room or pullout administrative arrangement. Some secondary schools offer structured credit courses on leadership. Having students prepare and periodically update personal plans for leadership development, including provisions for obtaining the experiences set forth in their plans, is another promising activity. The value of this experience is enhanced when students share individual plans in group sessions, brief the group on their purpose, revise plans if the critique brings forth acceptable suggestions, report to peers on progress made after following the plans for a period of time, and evaluate the plans using self-designed criteria.

Mentorships and internship programs provide opportunities for youth to work with adult community leaders who are willing to help identify, develop, and nurture future leaders.

Leadership Through Extracurricular Activities

Since leadership is learned over time through involvement with others, extracurricular activities provide fertile ground for nurturing future leaders. Group participation offers unique opportunities for young people to belong, support others, and learn a variety of leadership styles. Students learn how to encourage others, create group spirit, and resolve conflict. They begin to understand diverse attitudes, skills, and talents and how to interact effectively with a diversity of people while working toward a common goal.

Leadership in extracurricular activities has been found to be more highly correlated with adult leadership than with academic achievement. A 10-year study conducted with 515 high school student leaders revealed that almost two-thirds of them participated in out-of-school organizations and athletics and more than half participated in fine arts activities.

Although there are many organized extracurricular activities for youth, those who want to develop their leadership potential can do so through less formal methods. Individuals or groups can plan special projects or a leadership plan by setting goals, objectives, and timelines toward a mission of improving some area of the school or community. Skills such as seeking all available information, defining a group task, and devising a workable plan may be developed through any community project. No matter how small or large the goal, the process involved in devising and implementing the plan develops leadership potential.

Leadership is much more than being elected or appointed to a position, and it is acquired most effectively through practice. Educators, parents, and other concerned adults who are interested in the development of leadership in gifted youth can make a difference in the lives of these students by providing them with opportunities to realize their leadership potential.

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ERIC DIGEST

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Developing Metacognition

by Elaine Blakey and Sheila Spence *

Metacognition is thinking about thinking, knowing "what we know" and "what we don't know." Just as an executive's job is management of an organization, a thinker's job is management of thinking. The basic metacognitive strategies are:

1. Connecting new information to former knowledge.
2. Selecting thinking strategies deliberately.
3. Planning, monitoring, and evaluating thinking processes. (Dirkes, 1985)

A thinking person is in charge of her behavior. She determines when it is necessary to use metacognitive strategies. She selects strategies to define a problem situation and researches alternative solutions. She tailors this search for information to constraints of time and energy. She monitors, controls and judges her thinking. She evaluates and decides when a problem is solved to a satisfactory degree or when the demands of daily living take a temporary or permanent higher priority.

Studies show that increases in learning have followed direct instruction in metacognitive strategies. These results suggest that direct teaching of these thinking strategies may be useful, and that independent use develops gradually (Scruggs, 1985).

Learning how to learn, developing a repertoire of thinking processes which can be applied to solve problems, is a major goal of education. The school library media center, as the hub of the school, is an ideal place to integrate these types of skills into subject areas or students' own areas of interest. When life presents situations that cannot be solved by learned responses, metacognitive behavior is brought into play. Metacognitive skills are needed when habitual responses are not successful. Guidance in recognizing, and practice in applying, metacognitive strategies, will help students successfully solve problems throughout their lives.

Strategies for Developing Metacognitive Behaviors

1. Identifying "what you know" and "what you don't know."

At the beginning of a research activity students need to make conscious decisions about their knowledge. Initially students write "What I already know about . . ." and "What I want to learn about . . . ." As students research the topic, they will verify, clarify and expand, or replace with more accurate information, each of their initial statements.

2. Talking about thinking.

Talking about thinking is important because students need a thinking vocabulary. During planning and problem-solving situations, teachers should think aloud so that students can follow demonstrated thinking processes. Modeling and discussion develop the vocabulary students need for thinking and talking about their own thinking. Labelling thinking processes when students use them is also important for student recognition of thinking skills.

Paired problem-solving is another useful strategy. One student talks through a problem, describing his thinking processes. His partner listens and asks questions to help clarify thinking. Similarly, in reciprocal teaching (Palinscar, Ogle, Jones, Carr, & Ransom, 1986), small groups of students take turns playing teacher, asking questions, and clarifying and summarizing the material being studied.

3. Keeping a thinking journal.

Another means of developing metacognition is through the use of a journal or learning log. This is a diary in which students reflect upon their thinking, make note of their awareness of ambiguities and inconsistencies, and comment on how they have dealt with difficulties. This journal is a diary of process.

4. Planning and self-regulation.

Students must assume increasing responsibility for planning and regulating their learning. It is difficult for learners to become self-directed when learning is planned and monitored by someone else.

Students can be taught to make plans for learning activities including estimating time requirements, organizing materials, and scheduling procedures necessary to complete an activity. The resource center's flexibility and access to a variety of materials allows the student to do just this. Criteria for evaluation must be developed with students so they learn to think and ask questions of themselves as they proceed through a learning activity.

5. Debriefing the thinking process.

Closure activities focus student discussion on thinking processes to develop awareness of strategies that can be applied to other learning situations.

A three step method is useful. First, the teacher guides students to review the activity, gathering data on thinking processes and feelings. Then, the group classifies related ideas, identifying thinking strategies used. Finally, they evaluate their success, discarding inappropriate strategies, identifying those valuable for future use, and seeking promising alternative approaches.

6. Self-Evaluation.

Guided self-evaluation experiences can be introduced through individual conferences and checklists focusing on thinking processes. Gradually self-evaluation will be applied more independently. As students recognize that learning activities in different disciplines are similar, they will begin to transfer learning strategies to new situations.

Establishing the Metacognitive Environment

A metacognitive environment encourages awareness of thinking. Planning is shared between teachers, school library media specialists, and students. Thinking strategies are discussed. Evaluation is ongoing.

In the creation of a metacognitive environment, teachers monitor and apply their knowledge, deliberately modeling metacognitive behavior to assist students in becoming aware of their own thinking.

Metacognitive strategies are already in teachers' repertoires. We must become alert to these strategies, and consciously model them for students.

Problem-solving and research activities in all subjects provide opportunities for developing metacognitive strategies. Teachers need to focus student attention on how tasks are accomplished. Process goals, in addition to content goals, must be established and evaluated with students so they discover that understanding and transferring thinking processes improves learning.

In this rapidly changing world, the challenge of teaching is to help students develop skills which will not become obsolete. Metacognitive strategies are essential for the twenty-first century. They will enable students to successfully cope with new situations. Teachers and school library media specialists capitalize on their talents as well as access a wealth of resources that will create a metacognitive environment which fosters the development of good thinkers who are successful problem-solvers and lifelong learners.

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ERIC Digest

The Development of Social Competence in Children

Sherri Oden

Researchers have tried to pinpoint the origins of positive social adjustment in relation to genetic, familial, educational, and other factors. This paper reviews research on the development of social competence in infants and children, emphasizing the developmental processes which take place in the family, peer groups, preschool, and elementary school. Also discussed are difficulties in social development.

Infants as Social Beings

Breakthroughs in methodology for assessing infants' perceptual abilities have shown that even newborns are quite perceptive, active, and responsive during physical and social interaction. The newborn infant will imitate people, stick out its tongue, flutter its eyelashes, and open and close its mouth in response to similar actions from an adult or older child. Through crying and other distress sounds, the infant signals physical needs for food, warmth, safety, touch, and comfort.

Infants' physical requirements are best met when delivered along with social contact and interaction. Babies who lack human interaction may "fail to thrive." Such infants will fail to gain sufficient weight and will become indifferent, listless, withdrawn and/or depressed, and in some cases will not survive (Clarke-Stewart & Koch, 1983).

Increasingly, an infant will engage in social exchanges by a "reciprocal matching" process in which both the infant and adult attempt to match or copy each other by approximation of each other's gaze, use of tongue, sounds, and smiles. Bruner (1978) and others have proposed that these social interaction processes also constitute a "fine tuning" system for language and cognitive development.

Family Attachment Systems

It is important for infants to maintain close relationships with one or more adults. Typically, one adult is the mother, but others may be fathers, older siblings, or family friends. The smiling and laughing of an infant become responses to social stimulation and objects provided by specific persons (Goldbert, 1982). A growing "bonding" attachment, marked by strong mutual affect, with at least one particular adult, is critical to the child's welfare and social-emotional development.

Attachment, evident within six to nine months, becomes obvious when the infant shows distress when the mother (or other attachment figure) departs from a setting. Infants and toddlers who are "securely attached" are affectionate and tend not to cling to their mothers, but to explore the surrounding physical and social environments from this "secure base," showing interest in others and sharing their explorations with the mother by pointing and bringing objects of interest.

The socialization of the child is facilitated not only by the parents, but also within the family context, which may include relatives and friends who support the parents and children, and further reinforce cultural values. Studies by Baumrind (1973) and others have shown that, as children develop, parents use different methods of control or leadership styles in family management that fall into fairly predictable categories:

- authoritarian (high control)
- authoritative (authority through having knowledge and providing direction)
- permissive (low control or direction)
- combinations of the above

Some cultural groups tend to prefer one or the other of these styles, each of which encourages and controls different patterns of behavior in children. Mothers who are more verbal in their influence on children's actions have been found to use "benign" instructive direction that appears to result in the child having greater social competence at home, with peers, and in school settings.

Peer Relationships

As a toddler, the child moves in peer contexts which provide opportunities for learning to sustain interaction and develop understanding of others. Piaget (1932) pointed to peer interaction as one major source of cognitive as well as social development, particularly for the development of role-taking and empathy. In the contexts of school, neighborhood, and home, children learn to discriminate among different types of peer relationships—best friends, social friends, activity partners, acquaintances, and strangers (Oden, 1987). Through engaging in peer relationships and social experiences, especially peer conflict, children acquire knowledge of the self versus other and a range of social interaction skills. Mixed-age peer interaction also contributes to the social-cognitive and language development of the younger child while enhancing the instructive abilities of the older child (Hartup, 1983).

Children's social-cognitive development, including moral judgment, appears to parallel cognitive development as children's perceptions of relationships, peers, and social situations become more abstract and less egocentric.

Preschoolers are less able to differentiate between best friends and friends than elementary school-age children. But young children can provide specific reasons why they do not like to interact with certain peers. From six to 14 years, children shift their views of friendship relationships from sharing of physical activities to sharing of materials, being kind or helpful, and, eventually, perceiving friendships that allow individuality to be expressed or supported (Berndt, 1981).

Limiting Factors in Social Development

A child's connection with a given family, neighborhood, center, or school may limit opportunities for social development. Mixed age, sex, racial, or cultural peer interactions may be infrequent and highly bound by activity differences and early learned expectations, thereby limiting the extent of diversity in peer interaction. This lack of diversity limits the child's ability to be socially competent in various circumstances (Ramsey, 1986).

Formally structured educational situations, built around teacher-group interaction, tend to result in fewer peer interactions than occur in less formal settings. Fewer socially isolated children are found in informal classrooms where activities are built around projects in which peers can establish skills for collaboration and activity partnership (Hallinan, 1981).

The long term benefits of positive peer interactions and relationships have been shown in a number of studies (Oden, 1986). Greater social adjustment in high school and adulthood has been found for people who at 9 or 10 years of age were judged to be modestly to well accepted by peers. Poor peer acceptance results in fewer peer experiences, few of which are positive, thus creating a vicious cycle of peer rejection.

Various instructional approaches and experiences related to social skills development have proved effective in increasing children's social competence. Coaching, modeling, reinforcement, and peer pairing are methods based on the same learning processes evident in early adult-child relations. With these methods, social-cognitive and behavioral skills can be developed which can provide poorly accepted peers with the ability to break the cycle of peer rejection. Children appear to learn how to more competently assess peer norms, values, and expectations and select actions that may bring them within the "threshold of peer acceptance" (Oden, 1987).

Societal factors also affect children's social development. Stressed families and those with little time for interaction with children have become a focus of research as divorce rates have risen. Poverty conditions undermine opportunities for children's positive development. Further investigation is needed on the linkage between child development and social factors.

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DIGEST

DROPOUT PREVENTION

High dropout rates among high school students remain a blight on school systems across the country. School officials recognize the burden placed on society by large numbers of students who lack necessary educational and social skills. Educators, however, are using a variety of methods to encourage students to stay in school.

How many students drop out?

The National Center for Education Statistics estimates that about 14 percent of students who were sophomores in 1980 dropped out of school by 1982. This percentage represents over one-half million students.

A breakdown of subgroups indicates that males are more likely to drop out than females (15 vs. 13 percent). Hispanics and blacks (18 and 17 percent, respectively) had higher dropout rates than whites.

The Center for Human Resource Research, in a longitudinal study conducted from 1979 through 1982, points out that some dropouts reenroll and get a diploma, while others graduate by virtue of passing a GED examination. Of 25.5 million students who had graduated by 1982, 6.3 percent held a GED rather than a diploma.

What are the characteristics of the typical dropout?

School dropouts tend to fall into the general pattern of academic underachievement and social and emotional problems. Dropouts generally perform below grade level and have problems making social adjustments. Many dropouts are also eligible for special education programs or services.

Characteristics of typical dropouts include:

1. a belief that high school is a different, more difficult experience than grade school
2. a history of transferring schools or changing school systems
3. a feeling of not sharing a sense of "belonging" to the high school as a whole
4. a tendency to avoid talking with school personnel about dropping out because they doubt it will help or because they do not know whom to contact
5. a feeling of losing interest in school and a belief that school personnel have lost interest in them
6. a belief they possess too many problems to successfully complete their education
7. family problems such as divorce, death, separation, abuse, or other problems
8. situations in which other family members drop out of school

What are the financial and social costs of dropouts?

After dropping out, adolescents show even higher rates of problem behaviors, isolation from their families, and unemployment. Statistics reinforce the argument that high school dropouts have more trouble getting jobs than do graduates. Labor Department figures show that unemployment rates for high school dropouts jumped from 19 percent at the end of 1970 to 25.3 percent at the end of 1980, while unemployment for high school graduates rose only from 11.5 percent to 13.9 percent.

Adolescents who quit before finishing high school are less able to provide for themselves and much more likely to become burdens on society. As one principal put it, "Instead of talking tax dollars for dropout programs, let's talk welfare, let's talk Aid to Dependent Children, let's talk about all the money society will have to pay for these kids if they can do nothing when they leave high school."

How can schools help potential dropouts?

Schools dedicated to dropout prevention tend to cite four main goals as central to any formula for prevention: seek funding for dropout prevention programs, develop links with community agencies that can help schools in guiding teachers and students to appropriate services, identify and work with organizations than can help students improve their academic environment, and prepare research and information on how schools, homes, and the community can combat the dropout problem.

Additional methods for preventing dropouts include:

1. emphasize support programs operating in schools
2. encourage cocurricular activities for as many students as possible
3. increase the information supplied to students about dealing with the school system
4. increase structured group meetings for high-risk students within the school setting
5. increase alternative classes, work programs, and correspondence classes
6. allow students who could realistically function better elsewhere to transfer to a different school
7. encourage families of troubled students to seek family support and couseling from professional agencies
8. recognize potential dropouts as special education candidates
9. maintain a night school program
10. make homebound tutoring available to as many high-risk students as possible

What features characterize successful programs?

EXPO, the Experimental Program for Orientation at Gateway High School in Aurora, Colorado, is representative of effective programs that identify potential dropouts early and help keep them in school. Initially, the program tried to help high school juniors and seniors who were about to leave school. But most of these students dropped out regardless of teacher support. The teachers participating in EXPO began to investigate what went wrong.

The teachers soon discovered the problem was too little too late. They adopted a different strategy: identify early those eighth grade students who were potential dropouts. The organizers of EXPO stressed two key procedural rules: (1) students would be invited to volunteer for the program (no one was to be coerced into participating), and (2) students enrolled in special education programs were excluded (because they were already receiving special attention). The invitations to students stressed that EXPO was designed to assist students in the orientation to high school life.

The results of EXPO after only one year were impressive. EXPO students earned grade point averages nearly a full point higher than potential dropouts not enrolled in EXPO. EXPO students were truant an average of 17 class hours compared with the 96.5 class hours for students not enrolled in EXPO. Only one EXPO student dropped out of school.

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HIGHLIGHTS ...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

The Dropout's Perspective on Leaving School

Introduction

Researchers and theorists have studied and written about the reasons that students drop out of high school, what happens to these dropouts, and what the future holds for them. But what do the dropouts themselves have to say about their decision to drop out? How do they see their lives after dropping out? What advice would they offer high school students today who are thinking of dropping out?

Reasons for Dropping Out

What Dropouts Say. Asked why they decided to leave high school, dropouts from the past 30 years consistently cited three major reasons (Curley, Sawyer, & Savitsky, 1971; "High School," 1984; "High School," 1977; Kumar & Bergstrand, 1979; "Mother," 1982; Norris, Wheeler, & Finley, 1980; Peng & Takai, 1983; Stetler, 1959):

1. A dislike of school and a view that school is boring and not relevant to their needs.
2. Low academic achievement, poor grades, or academic failure.
3. A need for money and a desire to work full-time.

Many female dropouts also cited pregnancy or marriage as reasons for dropping out. These issues, however, will not be addressed in this digest.

What Researchers Say. Studies of high school dropouts conducted over the past 30 years in several states and nationwide have identified these same three basic reasons for dropping out (see references cited above).

1. **Dislike of School**. Consistent with the dropouts' reported dislike of and boredom with school, researchers have found a pattern of absenteeism among dropouts when they were still in school and a low rate of participation in extracurricular activities.
2. **Low Academic Achievement**. Researchers have found that lowered performance in either reading or mathematics tended to increase the likelihood that a student would leave school. Data suggest that failure often begins in elementary school.
3. **Desire to Work**. High school dropouts tend to belong to families of low socioeconomic status ("Mother," 1982; Peng & Takai, 1983). This finding is supported by reports of the dropouts themselves that they left school planning to work full-time. The next section examines how these plans worked out for the dropouts.

Life After Dropping Out

Employment Issues. Dropouts interviewed in a Phoenix, Arizona study (Norris et al., 1980) reported quitting school either because they already had a job (15.7%) or because they wanted to work (37.1%). A follow-up study revealed that far fewer respondents were able to get a job, work at a job they already had, or learn a trade than had planned to do so.

Interviews with other dropouts confirm the difficulty that dropouts have in finding and keeping jobs:

- Of dropouts interviewed in a Wisconsin study (Kumar & Bergstrand, 1979), 60% reported being employed full-time and another 8% reported being employed part-time. One-third of employed respondents reported earning less than minimum wage.
- Of dropouts interviewed in Philadelphia ("High School," 1977), 46% reported being unemployed. Of employed dropouts, 37% held unskilled jobs or worked in low-paying service occupations.
- Of dropouts interviewed in Connecticut (Stetler, 1959) 25% of dropouts reported working full-time while 24% reported being unemployed and looking for work.
- Of Dade County, Florida dropouts interviewed ("High School," 1984), 60% reported being unemployed and not enrolled in any vocational or academic program.
- Of dropouts interviewed in the *High School and Beyond* study (Peng & Takai, 1983), approximately 60% of males and 33% of females reported working full- or part-time while 27% of males and 31% of females were unemployed and looking for work.

Dropouts often have lower occupational aspirations than do their peers. A study of dropouts and high school students in Dade County, Florida ("High School," 1984) who were matched for race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status found that those who stayed in school had a quite different view of their lives compared with dropouts. The majority of dropouts reported wanting blue collar jobs, while in-school students were almost equally divided among blue collar, white collar, and professional occupational aspirations. It is important to note that the in-school group consisted of potential dropouts still in school rather than high achievers.

Unemployment rates are very high among high school dropouts and dropouts earn less future income than do high school graduates. Most employed dropouts in the Dade County, Florida study reported they were earning minimum wage while one-third of employed dropouts in the Wisconsin study reported earning less than minimum wage. Employed dropouts in a variety of studies reported

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being employed in unskilled jobs or in low-paying service occupations offering little opportunity for upward mobility.

Return to Education. Although many dropouts report leaving school because of boredom or a dislike of school, many return to some type of educational program once they realize how limited their opportunities are without a high school diploma.

Approximately two-thirds of dropouts interviewed in a 1956-57 study (Stetler, 1959) planned to complete their high school education in the future, either through day school, night school, or training programs in the armed services. Twenty-nine percent of dropouts interviewed in Massachusetts (Curley et al., 1971) returned to school after dropping out and 26% of dropouts interviewed in the Philadelphia study were back in some educational program.

In the Phoenix, Arizona study, dropouts were interviewed who had enrolled in alternative schools. They reported returning to school because they: (1) wanted to graduate so they could have more opportunities; (2) needed more education to support themselves or their families; (3) saw no future in what they were doing outside of school; or (4) were bored with being out of school.

Dropouts Evaluate Their Decision

Some researchers have asked dropouts how they felt about their decision to leave school. Peng and Takai (1983) found that 51% of males and 55% of females considered leaving school a bad decision. Almost 50% of dropouts interviewed by Stetler (1959) reported, in retrospect, that their decision to drop out was a bad one while 35% reported it was a good decision. Of dropouts interviewed by Curley et al. (1971), 37.7% thought dropping out was a bad decision while 33.5% thought it was the right decision.

Dropout Essays

An important resource for persons working with potential dropouts is the collection of essays, *Is School Important: Essays by People Who Know* (1987), papers written by Alaskan dropouts enrolled in a General Educational Development (GED) correspondence program. In their papers, students discuss why they quit school, how well they did in school, what they learned there, and whether it was difficult for them in the "real world" without a diploma. They offer advice to other students who are considering dropping out of school.

Conclusion

There are numerous programs and activities designed to lower the dropout rate and keep students in school through high school graduation. The vast majority of these programs are staffed by individuals who place high value on school and education. Perhaps potential dropouts also need to hear from individuals who at one time shared their own views of school as boring, irrelevant, a waste of time, and not for them, individuals who chose to drop out of school. Hearing from experienced dropouts could provide a new perspective and help the potential dropout to reevaluate his position and choose to graduate from high school.

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DRUG TESTING

By Amy Klauke and revised by Magaret Hadderman

The issue of drug testing in schools galvanizes emotions about both civil liberties and moral obligations. Our educational institutions must be committed to respect for student and staff privacy. Yet school administrators are feeling pressure to adopt urgent measures to keep drugs and alcohol from further endangering the physical, emotional, and mental well-being of our youth.

What is the current status of drug use in the schools?

The rate of drug use among teenagers is higher in the United States than in any other industrial society. Sixty-one percent of high school seniors have tried drugs (Lewis 1987), and 20 percent (3.3 million) of 14- to 17-year-olds have serious drinking problems. Drunk driving remains the primary cause of death among teenagers. Schools suffer from the subsequent loss of concentration, determination, and social skills among both students and staff members who are substance abusers.

Many school officials claim that their responsibility "to ensure that employees and students report fit for duty" (Lewis) obligates them to implement severe measures for the detection and punishment of drug users.

These claims are reinforced by a national anti-drug campaign and Congressional passage of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1986 (and 1989 amendments) tying institutional compliance to federal funding eligibility requirements. The 1989 legislation added $173 million for drug abuse prevention programs aimed at school districts in disadvantaged areas (Penning 1990).

What legal questions arise when schools consider drug testing?

Drug testing raises issues that pertain to both the Fourth Amendment, which protects citizens from unreasonable search and seizure (judges have found drug testing to constitute such a search), and the Fourteenth Amendment, which requires that citizens be treated as innocent until proven guilty and be accorded due process of law when accused.

In *Patchogue-Medford Congress of Teachers v. Union Free School District*, the state appellate panel held that "there must be some degree of suspicion before the dignity and privacy of a teacher may be compromised by forcing the teacher to undergo a urine test." In other words, there must be a "factual basis" for suspecting a particular teacher of using illegal drugs. Paradoxically, such an accumulation of evidence would usually preclude the necessity for testing body fluids. The court did concede that drug testing restrictions may soften in situations where an employee's substance use might endanger the public.

In two 1989 cases (*Skinner v. Railway Labor Executives Association* and *National Treasury Employees Union v. Von Rabb*) involving public employees, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public safety interests outweighed privacy and "individualized suspicion" requirements (Sendor 1989). These "special needs" cases may have implications for policies concerning school employees with "diminished expectations of privacy," such as school bus drivers (Allred 1989).

In *Odenheim v. Carlstadt-East Rutherford Regional School District*, the court held that drug testing as a part of mandatory physical exams was "an attempt to control student discipline under the guise of medical procedure." Attempts to pretest athletes raise the issue of whether extracurricular activities are rights or privileges.

In *Schail v. Tippecanoe County School Corporation* (1988), a federal district court ruled that a drug analysis program for student athletes was justified by the school's "legitimate need to ensure drug-free athletes" (Gittins 1988). In this ruling, participation in interscholastic athletics was considered a privilege, not a "property" or "liberty" interest protected by the Fourteenth Amendment—especially since the testing program preserved confidentiality, lacked criminal repercussions, and prohibited sports participation only after repeated offenses.

Because metabolisms differ, and results are influenced by the time and amount ingested, urinalysis and breathilizer tests inaccurately reflect an individual's use or abuse of a controlled substance, particularly marijuana. Instances can occur, as in *Jones v. McKenzie*, in which a positive urinalysis test cannot be confirmed by an alternative testing method.

According to Eugene A. Lincoln's (1989) analysis of three hypothetical cases, school officials have no authority or responsibility to regulate offcampus conduct with "no bearing on the proper maintenance of the educational process." A student's observed conduct on school premises is more important than where that student used marijuana or other drugs. Mandatory urinalysis should be based only on individualized suspicion and should satisfy both prongs (reasonable suspicion and appropriate circumstances) of the *T.L.O. v. New Jersey* test for search and seizure constitutionality. School administrators would also be wise to use less intrusive measures, such as searching a suspected student's locker or personal belongings.

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How might drug testing be applied in a fair, economical, and legally safe manner?

Although any testing procedure risks charges of defamation, invasion of property, infliction of emotional distress, or wrongful discharge, several precautions can reduce the dangers for schools determined to test constituents for drug use.

Extensive involvement (including education about drug and alcohol abuse) by parents, community, school board members, teachers, staff, and students in planning a drug policy goes a long way toward preventing future court cases. Voluntary, nondisciplinary procedures should be encouraged, with rules and punitive actions clearly and publicly stated. Advice from a school board's legal counsel is recommended before implementation.

Prescreening and, when evidence warrants, individualized testing by a reliable, independent medical agency remain the least objectionable methods of testing for substance abuse. Positive results should be proceeded by followup tests, hearings, reviews held within a reasonable timespan, and punitive or rehabilitative measures.

How might drug testing affect student attitudes?

For some students, testing followed by nonpunitive, rehabilitative action may come as a respite from out-of-control behavior. As Brian Mittman (1987) asserts, "Teenagers who are weak enough to fall victim to drug abuse generally are incapable of dealing with it." Others may appreciate the removal of temptation.

On the other hand, most adolescents grow through a period of reshaping identity, experimenting, challenging, and taking risks. What might have been passing curiosity or mild rebellion should not be construed as evidence of deviance in character. A negative public image can irreparably damage a teenager's self-identity and self-esteem.

What are some alternatives to drug testing in the schools?

According to Michael Buscemi (1985), "research has demonstrated repeatedly that short-term programs and those that rely exclusively on information about drugs and alcohol are not effective." Effective policies tend to be both preventative and ameliorative, long-term and comprehensive. They involve curriculum and sometimes organizational changes and are nourished by a broad base of input and support.

Many authorities believe youthful substance abuse is symptomatic of high stress and a dearth of coping skills. Schools might alleviate the motivation for substance abuse by strengthening students' personal skills and peer support systems, providing appealing extracurricular activities, emphasizing health promotion, and encouraging drug-free lifestyles among their staff and student bodies.

Adult examples of positive stress management and body care can contribute significantly to a student's cultivation of similar life habits. So can celebrity testimonies and classroom discussions probing the glamorization of alcohol and drugs by the popular media.

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EDUCATING HOMELESS CHILDREN

Introduction

Until the 1980s, the American homeless population was comprised mainly of older males. Today, homelessness strikes much younger segments of the society. In fact, a 25-city survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors in 1987 found that families with children constitute the fastest growing segment of the homeless population (House of Representatives, 1987). Many homeless children are clustered in inner cities; this transient and frequently frightened student population creates additional problems - both legal and educational - for already overburdened urban school administrators and teachers.

Demographics of Homeless School-Age Children

Estimates of the total number of homeless Americans range from 350,000 (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1986) to 3 million (National Coalition for the Homeless, 1987). Likewise, estimates of the number of homeless school-age children vary radically (Children's Defense Fund, 1988). A U.S. Department of Education (DOE) report, based on state estimates, asserts that there are 220,000 homeless school-age children, about one-third of whom do not attend school on a regular basis (1989). But, the National Coalition for the Homeless estimates that there at least two times as many homeless children, and that less than half of them attend school regularly (CDF, 1988).

One segment the homeless children population that is particularly difficult to count consists of the "throwaway" youths, who have been cast out of their homes. The Elementary School Center in New York estimates that there are 1.5 million of them, many of whom are not counted as children because they do not stay in the family shelters and tend to live by themselves on the streets.

The five cities with the greatest number of homeless children are Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, the Minneapolis metropolitan area, and Houston (DOE, 1989)—cities whose education systems are also taxed heavily by the needs of the other inner city students they serve.

Education Provisions of the McKinney Act

The Federal law, the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, includes a section that addresses the educational needs of homeless children.

The education provisions of the McKinney Act are premised on the beliefs that: all homeless children have the right to a free, appropriate education; and state and local laws and regulations must be revised, if necessary, to assure that homeless children are not denied this right.

The laws that most frequently need to be revised at the state and local level are school residency laws. Under the McKinney Act, schools can no longer deny access to homeless students without proof of residency within the school's zone. In addition, rules regarding guardianship must be waived for homeless students living with foster parents or relatives other than their legal guardians.

The Act instituted a two-year Federal grant program calling for each state department of education to establish an office of the Coordinator of Education of Homeless Children and Youth. The coordinator is responsible for gathering statewide data for the U.S. Department of Education on the number and school attendance rates of homeless children, and for writing state plans for educating these children.

These state plans must include at least the following provisions:

- procedures for resolving disputes regarding education placements of homeless students;
- authorization for state and local agencies to make determinations required in all components of the plan; and
- assurance that local educational agencies will accommodate students "in keeping with the best interest of the child," rather than on the basis of administrative convenience or cost (Bowen, Purrington, Layton, & O'Brien, 1989).

This third component of the state plans provides homeless parents and students with two options for school selection: 1) continuance at the school of origin; or 2) the student can transfer to the school nearest the temporary shelter. In most cases, it is up to the student's school district to provide transportation from the shelter or hotel to the school.

In addition, the state plans must assure that homeless children are provided with the same services as other students in the school and that local school officials must maintain appropriate records on each homeless child (Bowen et al., 1989).

Problems Facing Local Educators

Given the mandates of the McKinney Act and the requirements of the new state plans, local education officials must devise methods of overcoming the various problems that arise in providing services for homeless children. The following list, derived from the U.S. Department of Education report (1989) and ERIC/CUE interviews with educators and homeless advocates, documents the most frequently cited educational problems of homeless children:

- Transporting homeless students, many of whom change shelters often, to and from school can be complicated.
- School records are rarely transferred from school to school promptly because parents are often embarrassed to inform schools that they are homeless. Without records, new teachers must invest extra time in assessing achievement levels.
- Health records, especially for those families who lost their homes in fires or who are fleeing from an abusive spouse, are rarely intact. Although many state laws previously mandated that children could not attend school without their immunization records, local educators are forced to become more lenient. Homeless children may end up having to be reimmunized.
- As students move from shelter to shelter and school to school, they never stay in one place long enough for teachers to assess their special needs.
- Homeless students rarely have the space or the peace and quiet for homework. Shelters are often large, noisy one-room barracks-like structures with no privacy. Students living in hotels often share one small room with their entire family.
- Education is not a top priority of homeless families, as parents are preoccupied with finding food, safe shelter, and employment.
- General lack of community services for homeless families, including health and mental health care, as well as day care for school-age mothers, makes regular school attendance impossible.
- Emotional and socialization problems are common consequences of homelessness. Many homeless students are under severe stress and act depressed or aggressive. Students are often embarrassed to tell anyone at school about their lifestyles and therefore have a difficult time socializing with peers.

Solutions to Problems of Educating Homeless Children

Despite the lack of agreement on how local educators should help meet the needs of homeless children and youth, several innovative and helpful programs are in place around the country. Given adequate funds and support, educators say they could provide the following programs for their homeless families:

- *School-shelter liaisons*, or district employees who meet with families as they move into temporary housing and assist in getting students enrolled in the nearest schools. Examples of such efforts are found in Newark, Cleveland, and certain school districts in New York City. These district employees can also arrange transportation for students who choose to remain at their original school. And for those students who transfer from their schools of origin, liaisons can help obtain academic records quickly. They also help to assure that students who leave the shelters and hotels are enrolled in new school.
- *After-school and extended day programs* to provide homeless students with a quiet place to do homework or participate in recreational activities.
- *Special tutoring programs* for homeless students, especially those who have missed a great deal of school.
- *Pre-school programs* for homeless children.
- *Workshops for parents* on how to find housing and jobs.
- *In-school social workers and counselors*, who can help with everything from academic counseling to clothes drives for homeless families.
- *In-service training programs* to help raise the awareness and sensitivity of school personnel to the problems and daily trials these students face.

While educators realize that such programs will not solve the most crucial problem for homeless children—the lack of a safe, warm place to call home—they contend that such programs and services will help schools meet the requirements of the McKinney Act as they help children survive during a time of great stress and turmoil.

—Amy Stuart Wells

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Educating Language-Minority Children

Barbara T. Bowman

Why can't all Americans just speak standard English? This plaintive question reflects the distress many citizens feel about the linguistic diversity in the schools. In many school districts, languages of Central and South America, Africa, and Asia mix with American dialects, creating classrooms in which communication is difficult. Across America, children are not learning essential lessons in school. In the next decade or two, the problem will become even more serious. Language-minority children will become the majority in public schools, seriously straining the capacity of those institutions.

In a nation increasingly composed of people who speak different languages and dialects, the old notion of melting them together through the use of a common language is once again attractive. Requiring all children to speak the same language at a high level of proficiency would make the task of educating them a good deal easier. Unfortunately, what seems quite good in theory is often difficult to put into practice. In this instance, the interrelationship of culture, language, and the children's development may make a common language difficult to obtain.

Culture, Language and Development

Differences in the ways groups think and act are more than a matter of using different words or performing different actions for the same purposes. Differences in cultures are more substantial than whether members of a community eat white bread, corn pone, or tortillas. The behavior of people varies, and the beliefs, values, and assumptions that underlie behavior differ as well. Culture influences both behavior and the psychological processes on which it rests. Culture forms a prism through which members of a group see the world and create shared meanings. And a group's culture is reflected by the group's language.

Child development follows a pattern similar to that of culture. Major structural changes in children, such as language learning, arise from the interaction of biology and experience. Such changes are remarkably similar in kind and sequence among cultural groups. But the knowledge and skills—the cultural learning—the child acquires at various ages depend on the child's family and community.

Learning a primary language is a developmental milestone and a developmentally appropriate educational objective. However, the uses to which that language is put are determined by the culture. As the ideas from a child's social world are brought to bear through the guidance of the older members of the community, children come to share meanings with their elders.

Classroom discourse presents children with the challenge of learning new rules for communication. The use of formal language, teacher control of verbal exchanges, question-and-answer formats, and references to increasingly abstract ideas characterize the classroom environment, with which many children are unfamiliar. To the extent that these new rules overlap with those that children have already learned, classroom communication is made easier. But children whose past experience with language is not congruent with the new rules will have to learn ways to make meaning all over again before they can use language to learn in the classroom.

When teachers and students come from different cultures or use different languages or dialects, teachers may be unaware of variations between their understanding of a context and their students'; between their expectations for behavior and the children's inclinations. When children and adults do not share common experiences and beliefs, adults are less able to help children encode their thoughts in language.

Teaching Children from Different Cultures

Teachers facing the challenge of teaching children from different cultural communities are hard-pressed to decide what constitutes an appropriate curriculum. If children from some groups are hesitant to speak up in school, how can teachers organize expressive language experiences? If children from some groups are dependent on nonverbal cues for meaning, how can teachers stress word meaning? How can teachers test for mastery of the curriculum if children do not speak a standard language or use the same styles of communication? Cultural diversity makes it hard for teachers to assess each child's developmental status, find common educational experiences to promote growth, and measure the achievement of educational objectives.

Given the complex interaction between culture and development, is it possible to design a developmentally appropriate curriculum? If that question implies that the same curriculum can be used for all children, the answer must be *no*. However, the following developmental principles can provide a conceptual framework for teachers trying to bridge the gap between children's cultural backgrounds and school objectives.

Guidelines for Teachers

First, teachers need to learn to recognize developmentally equivalent patterns of behavior. Before children come to school, they have all learned many of the same things, such as a primary language and communication styles. Although these developmental accomplishments may look different, they are developmentally equivalent. When a child does not respond to the social and cognitive expectations of the school, the teacher should look for a developmentally equivalent task to which the child will respond. A child who does not separate buttons correctly can be asked to sort car logos or other personally relevant artifacts. A child who does not listen to stories about the seasons may be spellbound by a story about an ice skater. Teachers with doubts about the development of culturally different children should assume that the children are normal and look at them again, recognizing that their own vision may be clouded by cultural myopia.

Second, it is essential not to value some ways of achieving developmental milestones more highly than others. Asa Hilliard and Mona Vaughn-Scott point out that because the behavior of African-American children is so different from that of their white peers, African-American children are often judged to be deficient, rather than different, in their development. Young children who speak languages other than English, or who speak nonstandard dialects, are often reluctant to give up this connection to their group. When such children find that the way they talk is not understood or appreciated in school, they are apt to become confused or disengaged. And their rejection by the school presages their rejection of school.

Third, teachers need to begin instruction with interactive styles and content that is familiar to the children. Whether this entails speaking in the child's primary language, using culturally appropriate styles of address, or relying on patterns of management familiar to the children, the purpose is to establish a basis for communication. While fluency in a child's primary language may not be possible for many teachers, they can nonetheless become more adept at planning and implementing a culturally sensitive curriculum. Such a curriculum encompasses more than tasting parties, ethnic costumes, and shopworn introductions to practices of people from different nations or racial groups. In order to teach such a curriculum, teachers must come to grips with their own ethnocentricity.

Fourth, school learning is most likely to occur when family values reinforce school expectations. Parents and other community members must view school achievement as a desirable and attainable goal if children are to build it into their sense of self. Interpreting the school's agenda for parents is one of the most important tasks for teachers.

Fifth, when differences exist between the cultural patterns of the home and community and those of the school, teachers must deal with these discrepancies directly. Teachers and children must create shared understandings and new contexts that give meaning to the knowledge and skills being taught. Learning mediated by teachers who are affectionate, interested, and responsive has greater sticking power than learning mediated by an adult who is perceived as impersonal and distant.

Sixth, for children from different racial and ethnic groups, meanings of words, gestures, and actions may differ. Assessment of learning outcomes presents a formidable problem when children misunderstand the teacher's requests for information or demonstrations of knowledge and skills. Formal assessment should be delayed until teachers and children have built a set of new meanings.

A developmentally appropriate curriculum can never be standardized in a multicultural community. But thoughtful teachers can use principles of child development to make the new context of school meaningful and to safeguard the self-confidence of children.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

The Emerging Role of the Community College Counselor

Overview

The changing characteristics of students attending community colleges and the decline in financial support for community colleges have redefined the role of counseling in the community college. In the 1950s and 1960s, counselors served an "in loco parentis" role (Leach, 1984), providing personal counseling, vocational guidance, and social support for the traditional community college student. In the 1970s and 1980s, ethnic minorities, older women, part-time students, and displaced workers began enrolling in community colleges. To meet the needs of these new students, community colleges are reinstating testing and placement, dismissal and probation policies, general education requirements, and select admissions programs.

The emerging role of counseling involves helping students to complete their academic objectives; the reduction of student attrition is a priority. Counselors must perform the roles of student developers and learning agents (Noel & Levitz, 1984). As the student developers, counselors must communicate to students the importance of skill building and other academic requirements and help them understand the value of their academic endeavors. As learning agents, counselors must assist, manage, and encourage students to build a pattern of success. Crucial characteristics that community college counselors need to be successful include a strong sense of professional mission, rapport, and empathy. Community college counselors must serve as student advocates and promote strategies for increasing minority student retention. The increase in nontraditional students coupled with a decrease in resources forces counselors to take more cost effective approaches to their counseling.

Student Developers

As student developers, counselors should assume the responsibility of communicating to students the importance of academics in vivid and realistic terms. The goals for the student developer should be to provide counseling, information, and support services to meet the students' developmental needs. The objectives should be as follows:

- To assist each interested student in making informed and realistic decisions in the areas of educational and career choices.
- To provide services that reflect the understanding that student development includes social, intellectual, psychological, and ethical development.
- To provide credit courses, seminars, group discussions, and one-on-one opportunities to assist in making realistic career and educational decisions.

A useful activity for the student developer is to design courses to help entering students define why they are in college, determine what they want from the college experience, and correlate their educational goals with career selection. These courses can benefit students by improving their retention, increasing their internalized locus of control, and enhancing intrinsic motivation (Mitchell & Young, 1979). According to Mitchell and Young (1979), these courses should be structured with sequential units providing information and exercises which require students to:

1. Familiarize themselves with college services in the area of advisement, financial aid, career planning, counseling, library resources, and job placement;
2. Assess their academic skills and weaknesses;
3. Learn to allocate their time effectively;
4. Articulate their expectation of the college and their tentative career choices;
5. Delineate their educational goals;
6. Establish a plan to achieve these goals;
7. Select relevant courses; and,
8. Develop a tentative schedule for the following semester.

Learning Agents

As a learning agent, the counselor is required to assist, manage, and encourage students to build a pattern of success. To be effective in this role, the counselor should be a central part of the primary intake and processing services such as registration, advising, orientation, test interpretation, and career planning. According to Lowe (1980), students receiving preregistration counseling had more satisfaction with their initial program of study and withdrew at a lower rate than non-counseled groups. In addition,

> Students receiving only perfunctory counseling had significantly more program changes, withdrew at a higher rate, and failed to return for the second quarter at a higher rate than did the students who underwent preregistration counseling. (Lowe, 1980)

Counselor services should meet the needs of those entering students by providing each student complete information and preparation for entry into appropriate courses. Some of the viable activities include:

1. Assessing student ability by using placement tests and interest inventories;
2. Assisting in establishing or clarifying education and career goals; and,
3. Helping students use college resources to meet their expectations.

Creative approaches for the learning agent can also have the counselor working with prospective college students before they enroll in the institution. They can offer and

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participate in life planning and career decision-making seminars to assist individuals in making decisions about future career and educational options and also prepare an overall plan concerning their future goals for living (Pulliams, 1989). These seminars and workshops can be offered to prospective students throughout the community at community junior and senior high schools, GED programs, churches, and community-based organizations.

Minority students are a critical population for the learning agent. They are more likely to live in poor socioeconomic conditions, less likely to have solid college preparatory experiences, and are more often subjected to factors that unduly interfere with their academic achievement and personal development. Seerley (1985) describes a program providing a satisfying intake process for this population. The program was designed to invite each student to participate, ensure they were aware of the services available at the college, provide special help situations and opportunities, focus on retention, and have each participant maintain a 2.00 GPA.

Effective community college counselors must possess certain crucial characteristics in order to be successful learning agents (Keller, 1983). One of the most important will be a strong sense of professional mission. Involved in this sense of mission should be a drive to help others and the belief that students can achieve all that they are capable of becoming. Now more than ever, rapport, the ability to develop favorable relationships with staff and students, will be mandatory for the new counseling role. Counselors will also have to possess empathy, the ability to understand what students are experiencing. A special perception of students will be needed by counselors: the ability to think in terms of the individual students and how their individual strengths and needs can be accommodated and tied into the challenges of the institution.

Cost Effectiveness and Resource Management

A decline in financial support for community colleges caused by cutbacks from federal, state, and local funding complements the aforementioned community college population changes. Consequently, the future role of counseling must address the challenge of reviewing traditional counseling activities and addressing the needs of the "new" community college population. It will also demand more careful managing of current personnel and fiscal resources and even an integrated organizational approach when community college counselors use community-based organizations for operational support.

Careful management of resources means that there must be more use of cost effective approaches for counseling. Some of the methods that should be considered are:

1. Expanding counseling services by establishing linkages with other service professionals within the college and the community.
2. Setting up cost effective personnel resources such as volunteer corps, peer counselors, and paraprofessionals.
3. Examining the establishment of fees for some services.
4. Reviewing counseling services each year to examine effectiveness and readjusting those services as needed.
5. Becoming familiar with new resource management approaches through professional organizations' workshops and seminars.

As part of the cost effective delivery of counseling services, computer software and hardware are playing more critical roles. Viable and appropriate computer utilization is becoming more common. Computers are especially useful in providing occupational and educational information to students.

Evening and part-time students place additional pressure on counseling resources. Creamer (1979) focuses on serving this group through the use of the following activities: self-help materials and activities; noncredit courses to deliver counseling services; and a collaboration among selected professionals to deal with the problem of counseling part-time and evening students.

Summary

The emerging role of community college counseling is actually an expansion of traditional roles: Community college counselors are becoming learning agents, student developers, and resource managers. This expansion of responsibilities is being activated by the influx of "new," nontraditional college students into the nation's community colleges and by declining resources caused by internal budget reductions and declining support from governmental sources.

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EMPLOYABILITY--THE FIFTH BASIC SKILL

Communication, mathematics, and science skills have been identified as the three basic academic skills required of high school graduates. Entry into the job market is contingent upon having a fourth set of skills as well. These are the job-specific or vocational skills required by the occupation. Although these four types of skills are critical to an individual's career progression, they do not guarantee job success. Many employers believe that employability skills--skills that enable an individual to acquire and keep a job--are of primary importance (Lankard 1987). This **ERIC Digest** discusses the relevance of employability as a fifth basic skill, describes employability components, and discusses strategies for incorporating employability skills into the instructional process.

Why Are Employability Skills Basic to Job Success?

The changing nature of today's employment picture is creating new challenges for employers and employees alike. Employers, faced with a shrinking labor pool, are encountering many applicants who have minimum job competencies. From these applicants, they must select for hire those who have the greatest potential for meeting job demands. Conversely, the jobs for which employers are hiring today require workers to have a broader range of competencies than ever before--competencies that are job specific but also include the kinds of management and organizational skills previously required only of supervisors.

The demand for this new kind of worker has been triggered by a number of factors, one of which is the multicultural nature of the work force. The U.S. Department of Labor projects that, by 2000, 75 percent of all people entering the work force will be women and minorities, many of whom are immigrants. To facilitate the job success of these individuals, employers and co-workers alike must be supportive and attempt to understand the unique attitudes, behaviors, and habits common to people of various cultures. Good interpersonal skills are crucial to such efforts at "valuing differences."

Increased automation has reduced the need for supervision of entry-level workers. These workers are now expected to operate independently in roles that require problem-solving and decision-making skills. Increased competition from national and international markets is also influencing changes in the workplace. Competition is a major factor driving business to be more efficient and to employ strategies that will improve production, service, and product quality. Because such strategies typically involve improving worker collaboration and teamwork, employers need creative, flexible workers who have a broad range of interpersonal and managerial skills.

What Skills Are Termed "Employability Skills"?

There are numerous listings of the subject area of employability skills. Most of the lists focus on the topics of personal image, attitudes, habits, and behaviors; techniques of communication, problem solving, and decision making; and management and organizational processes. A grouping of such skills was summarized by Gainer (1988) as follows:

- Individual Competence: communication skills, comprehension, computation, and culture
- Personal Reliability Skills: personal management, ethics, and vocational maturity
- Economic Adaptability Skills: problem solving, learning, employability, and career development
- Group and Organizational Effectiveness Skills: interpersonal skills, organizational skills, and skills in negotiation, creativity, and leadership.

The ***Connections: School and Work Transitions*** curriculum called "Work Maturity Skills" (Lankard 1987) identifies seven categories of employability skills and offers competency-based training modules for each. These categories and related modules are as follows:

1. **Present a Positive Image**: follow good grooming practices, practice good health habits, dress appropriately for the job, exhibit self-confidence
2. **Exhibit Positive Work Attitudes**: use basic social skills, be creative and willing to learn, take pride in your work
3. **Practice Good Work Habits**: maintain regular attendance, be thorough and diligent, follow safety practices
4. **Practice Ethical Behavior**: exercise integrity and good judgment, respect property, follow company rules
5. **Communicate Effectively**: demonstrate speech, writing, and nonverbal communication skills; demonstrate good listening habits
6. **Accept Responsibility**: use initiative, use problem-solving techniques, manage personal responsibilities
7. **Cooperate with Others**: work as a member of a team, work under supervision

Of the range of desired employability skills, some are evident to employers as early as the job interview. The effect of positive and negative behaviors, for example, was documented in a study of employer hiring decisions (Hollenbeck 1984). In this study, employers who watched a series of videotaped interviews rated applicants on job readiness. Applicants who demonstrated negative behaviors--language, appearance, mannerisms, and especially attitude--received lower assessments than those without negative behaviors. Negative behaviors also lowered employer assessments of other factors such as education and training, even though these factors remained constant in all interviews. Bad attitude had the greatest negative effect on employers' decisions to hire. Of the machine trade, clerical, and retail employers who assessed the applicants, none of the clerical or retail employers and only 11.1 percent of the machine trade employers would hire an applicant with a bad attitude, irrespective of the applicant's education and training record.

The Research and Policy Committee of the Committee on Economic Development summarized their 1984 survey of employer concerns in three points (Buck and Barrick 1987):

- For entry-level positions, employers are looking for young people who demonstrate a sense of responsibility, self-discipline, pride, teamwork, and enthusiasm.
- Employers strongly value employees' ability to learn and to solve problems.
- Employers think that schools are doing a poor job of developing these much-needed attitudes, abilities, and skills.

A survey sponsored by the National Association of Manufacturers (Barton and Kirsch 1990) found that employers want schools to take more responsibility for students' employability skill development. Employers said that they want schools to teach both general and specific employability skills, including attendance, punctuality, and good work attitudes. The consensus of employers in these and other similar studies remains consistent--employability skills are important on the job and must be taught in the schools.

Developing Employability Skills

The best results seem to be achieved when employability skill training is integrated with academic and vocational skill training--forming a set of five basic skills. In this way, the relevance of the five types of skills are interrelated and taught as basic to job market success--something in which the learner has a level of interest.

The following strategies are suggested for incorporating employability skill development concepts in the classroom (Bishop and Lankard 1987):

- **Demand Good Deportment in the Classroom.** Initiate strict guidelines for tardiness, class cutting, and discipline.
- **Express Work Values through Classroom Instruction.** Promote and require timeliness, effort, responsibility, and other values. Over 65 percent of studied employers were negatively affected by workers who did not try.
- **Encourage Self-Esteem in Students.** Expect the best from students. Attitudes about self were reflected in applicants' nonverbal behaviors--a factor influencing employer assessments.
- **Promote and Display a Positive Attitude in the Classroom.** Attitude is an important part of a person's employability rating and can be improved with practice and effort.
- **Use Instructional Materials that Illustrate the Importance of Employability Skill Development.** Izzo and Lankard (1987) provide examples of how having (or lacking) employability skills affects a person's ability to find, get, and keep a job.

Additional strategies teachers can use to monitor students' employability skill development were identified by Buck and Barrick (1987) as follows:

- Identify the problem so that the person can recognize habits that are annoying
- Define the terms that describe various habits
- Devise a way to measure traits, attitudes, or habits
- Give frequent feedback
- Concentrate on improving a limited number of habits at a time
- Employ a meaningful reward system
- Tell employers about improvements in work habits and attitudes
- Provide the student with a method of monitoring on-the-job behavior
- Make other class members a part of the monitoring, evaluation, and reward system

By addressing employability skill development as a fifth basic skill and teaching it concurrently with communication, mathematics, science, and vocational courses, the content can be analyzed and practiced daily so that students automatically follow practices and demonstrate behaviors that will enhance their job performance and retention.

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Empowerment for Later Life

Jane E. Myers

Introduction

The concept of empowerment has been variously defined and applied to numerous populations and circumstances. At the most basic level, empowerment is defined as "nurturing belief in capability or competence" (Ashcroft, 1987), or helping people gain a sense of personal power or control over their lives. The ultimate goal of empowerment is to enable persons to live in a manner which maximizes their ability to develop positive satisfying lifestyles. While this concept is equally applicable to anyone experiencing a devalued status, the focus here is on the application of empowerment concepts with a goal of maximizing developmental potential and life satisfaction among older persons.

Aging and the Need for Empowerment

The fact that our population is aging is no longer shocking; however, as a society, the phenomenon is still "new," not fully understood, and easy to "put on the shelf." Persons who are older today are survivors, having lived through more technological and other changes than occurred throughout the remainder of recorded history. They are also pioneers, exploring and creating lifestyles for the years ahead which previous generations did not experience.

In 1990, the average lifespan was 47 years. People could expect to grow up, marry, raise children, and enter the post-parental era; their life then was essentially complete. As we approach the year 2000, people can expect to live into their 80s, almost twice the lifespan of 100 years ago. Now when adults approach the "empty nest," they can expect to live another lifetime that lasts as long as the life they have already lived. Midlife is now a turning point, a time for reexamination and reevaluation of how life is lived, what it means, and what it can mean.

The length of life depends on many factors, the most significant of which is heredity. Gender is also an important factor: Women live longer than men. Older women are at greater risk than men of being single, poor, living alone, or living in long-term care settings.

Unfortunately, increases in the quality of life have not kept pace with increases in the quantity of life. Correlates of satisfaction in the later years include the presence of a spouse, children, social supports, income, good physical and emotional health, adequate housing and transportation, and independence. Even in the absence of a quality lifestyle, attitude often determines life satisfaction. Attitude is related to self-concept and locus of control, both of which may change in later life.

In general, attitudes toward older persons are negative, and often older persons internalize negative societal perceptions. These attitudes, combined with frequent losses (e.g., job, spouse, home, status), contribute to lowered self-esteem among older persons, along with an increasingly external locus of control, and a lack of feelings of self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy and Empowerment

Bandura (1982) proposed the concept of self-efficacy as an explanation of behavior and behavior change. People tend to avoid activities they believe exceed their coping abilities and undertake those they consider themselves capable of handling. Efficacy expectations influence the decision to attempt a behavior, the length of time it will be attempted, and the effort which will be involved. Low efficacy expectations in the face of obstacles will result in persons experiencing serious doubts or giving up, while high efficacy expectations will result in greater efforts being extended to achieve desired results. Some older widows, for example, are active in church or civic activities, social affairs, or travel. Others are largely isolated and uninvolved with life. Objective circumstances and resources may be similar for both sets of widows, however, the former experience a high sense of self-efficacy while the latter group do not.

Many persons reach their later years with a high sense of self-efficacy, having learned throughout their life that they are capable individuals whose efforts will be rewarded. The circumstances and multiple losses of later life, over which they have no control, may lead to a low sense of self-efficacy even among persons who felt otherwise when younger. In addition, older persons with an already low sense of self-efficacy may be expected to react to the losses of later life by giving up more easily and withdrawing. Empowerment, the process of helping people feel a sense of control over their lives, can be an effective strategy for enhancing a sense of self-efficacy among older persons.

Theoretical Approaches to Understanding Later Life

One of the major assumptions underlying the empowerment process is the need to recognize and foster strengths and competencies of older persons. Developmental theories provide a framework for viewing both the challenges and growth potential of later life, while transition theories provide an alternate model for viewing late life development. In contrast to child and adolescent development, the major milestones of adulthood are described in terms of psychological considerations rather than physical maturation, legal entitlement, or chronological age.

Numerous theorists have attempted to explain development over the lifespan. These theorists have proposed life-stage theories to explain normative aspects of development, or what people share in common (Havighurst, 1972; Erikson, 1963).

In contrast to the life-stage theories are the transition theories, those which attempt to explain behaviors based on life events and changes, rather than a predetermined sequence of irreversible stages. Transitions may be expected events (e.g., graduation, marriage), unexpected events (e.g., death of children, spouse), expected events that did not happen (e.g., marriage, birth of children), or chronic hassles which have a negative effect on self-concept and the ability to initiate change (e.g., a long-term unhappy marriage).

Many of the transitions of later life involve significant losses. What is unique to the older population is the onset of multiple losses before the grieving process for any one is complete.

Mental Health and Aging

Most persons cope with changes in their lives as they grow older with little disruption of functioning. At the same time, it is fairly well documented that mental health concerns increase with advancing age. Older persons experience many stresses, crises, and losses, in addition to the need to cope with devalued status. They are less likely to seek mental health care than other segments of the population; hence minor issues may escalate to major concerns before intervention is sought.

Kuypers and Bengtson (1973) proposed the Social Breakdown Syndrome (SBS) as an explanation of negative adjustment in old age. The SBS explains the process of interaction between social inputs and self-concept which results in a self-perpetuating cycle of negative psychological functioning. The first stage of this model is an existing precondition of susceptibility to psychological breakdown, possibly as a result of identity problems, declining health, loss of status, etc. In the second stage, other persons label the older person as incompetent or deficient in some aspect of behavior. This negative labeling by family, friends, and others leads to the third stage, induction into the sick role. As the older person begins to identify more strongly with the sick role (stage four), self-efficacy becomes impaired and the older person begins to perceive him or herself as inadequate and incapable of independent action. The effects of labeling and ageism make older persons particularly susceptible to this syndrome.

Reversing Breakdown Through Empowerment

The Social Reconstruction Syndrome (SRS) is a model of interventions designed to offset the negative effects of social breakdown (Kuypers & Bengtson, 1973). The underlying assumption is that the cyclical nature of breakdown can be interrupted, slowed, or reversed through inputs at any level of the cycle. This could include societal, environmental, and psychological interventions.

Societal inputs include the need to change ageist stereotypes and beliefs and develop valued roles for older persons during their retirement years. Environmental interventions are aimed at improving the adaptability of older persons through improving access to social services.

The encouragement of self-efficacy through empowerment is a vital strategy for interrupting and reversing the breakdown cycle. By helping older persons experience a sense of control in the management of their lives, and by promoting older persons as capable and self-determined, a sense of empowerment can be fostered. This may require significant modifications in the environment as well as individual perceptions. For example, one way to empower persons is to provide a means of involvement which promotes a sense of ownership and control. Advisory boards and resident panels are examples of strategies for involving older persons in decision making on their own behalf.

In general, consumers placed in the role of passive recipient, such as occurs when the medical model is predominant, tend to become and remain disempowered. For the medical model to incorporate empowerment, a paradigm shift from an illness model to a wellness model may be required.

Empowerment Through Wellness

Wellness, developmental counseling, and prevention often are used interchangeably. The benefit of such approaches is that they incorporate human needs from a lifespan perspective. Wellness is an active process of living in which persons strive to achieve a sense of balance and integration between their mind, body, and emotions (Leafgren & Elsenrath, 1986). Wellness focuses on self-responsibility, on the need to be assertive in creating the life you want rather than passive in just reacting to circumstances. Through an emphasis on freedom of choice, wellness approaches increase the responsibility of individuals for self-care. Wellness is essentially an empowering philosophy which has a goal of helping individuals identify areas of their lives over which they have control, and assisting them to make healthy lifestyle choices which enhance their physical and emotional well being, as well as their continued ability to make even more healthy choices.

Individual behavior is notoriously hard to change. It may be that the best way to ensure change is through creating a positive, healthy environment, in which helpers communicate a sincere belief in the capability of individuals to assume responsibility for their own total well-being. Such an environment is inherently empowering.

As we grow older, the cumulative effect of lifestyle choices becomes increasingly significant. Although the negative impact of unhealthy choices becomes increasingly evident, the good news is that it is never too late to change. Positive, healthy lifestyle choices can enhance the quality of life across the lifespan beginning whenever they are implemented. A philosophy of wellness across the lifespan is one way to respond to the challenge of creating a world where empowerment is the norm for all persons, regardless of their life circumstances.

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Educational Resources Information Center

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December 1989

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Enhancing Learning in At-Risk Students: Applications of Video Technology

Cognition and Technology Group *
Learning Technology Center, Peabody College of Vanderbilt University

Most educators today agree that we have a serious problem with respect to learners who are at risk of school failure. The purpose of this digest is to explore some possible uses of video technology that have been shown to be effective for enhancing learning in at-risk students.

Learning and At-Risk Students

It is extremely difficult to define who is at risk and who is not because being at risk is not related to a single cause, but rather to what Mann (1986) refers to as a "nesting of antecedent problems." However, most agree that at-risk learners are generally low achievers.

One reason for at-risk students' difficulty with learning is that much of current instruction for these students is remedial and is focused on transferring information in the form of facts and procedures. Unfortunately, information presented as facts is then stored as facts, and for most students it is not recognized as knowledge to be used to solve problems. The consequence is that the facts remain inert and often are not spontaneously used in problem solving situations (Bransford, Sherwood, Hasselbring, Kinzer, & Williams, in press; Whitehead, 1929). Indeed, findings from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (Dossey, Mullis, Lindquist, & Chambers, 1988) indicate that American students have significant difficulties in reasoning and in putting what they have learned in school to use in solving problems. It appears that our present system of formal education is doing a rather poor job of attaining this goal, especially with students who are at risk for school failure.

Shared Learning Environments and the Role of Video Technology

The concept of contextualized learning environments arises out of the recognition that students, particularly at-risk students, who are introduced to concepts and strategies out of a meaningful context will view them as irrelevant to daily life. Much of the work at Vanderbilt University's Learning Technology Center over the past five years has examined the use of shared contextualized learning environments and the effect of these environments on learning.

It appears that children often learn well when they and a mediator share a context or event that can be mutually explored (Feuerstein, Rand, Hoffman, & Miller, 1980). For example, Sherwood, Kinzer, Bransford, and Franks (1987) note that mediators, such as parents, siblings, peers, and other adults, can arrange the environment so that learners will encounter certain experiences. They can also help learners separate relevant from irrelevant information and connect present experiences with previous knowledge. Finally, mediators monitor the performance of learners to encourage as much independent performance as possible.

In the classroom, teachers play the role of mediator and try to help students relate new information to previously acquired knowledge. The teachers, however, often do not know which experiences are relevant for a particular child. This is a situation in which technology such as videotape and random access videodisc becomes especially valuable. With these tools teachers can create contexts that teachers and children can share. Video technology may not substitute for hands-on activities in various real world contexts; however, in some situations video is even superior to a field trip to the grocery store or zoo because the video can be replayed and reviewed as often as necessary.

Bransford et al., (in press) note three advantages to the use of video-based contexts. First, they provide rich sources of information with opportunities to notice sensory images, dynamic features, relevant issues, and inherent problems. Second, they give students the ability to perceive dynamic moving events and to more easily form rich mental models. This advantage is particularly important for lower achieving students and for students with low knowledge in the domain of interest. Third, video allows students to develop skills of pattern recognition which are related to visual and auditory cues rather than to events labeled by the teacher. In sum, video images are ideal for creating a common experience for the teacher and learner that can be used for "anchoring" new knowledge.

Video Applications for At-Risk Students

Several anchored instruction projects have been conducted at the Learning Technology Center and have shown definite advantages for learning in students considered to be at risk of school failure. Following are short descriptions of two of these projects.

Anchored Instruction in the Preschool. Johnson's 1987 study of preschoolers who were considered at risk was designed to ask whether story comprehension could be improved if students had the opportunity to experience the story within a rich, video-based context. He divided the at-risk students into two groups. He read the beginning of a simplified version of *Swiss Family Robinson* to one group and showed the other group a videodisc of the same part of the story.

Johnson found that both groups learned from the story; however, the videodisc group learned far more. In the text-only condition, students had to use their imagination to understand such things as the force that a storm must generate to smash a huge sailing ship upon rocks. Most of the students in Johnson's study, however, did not have the background experience or knowledge to imagine this. They had no experience with storms on the ocean, huge waves, or large sailing ships. The teacher could only describe what it must have been like for the Robinson family. By contrast, the video group could experience the storm vicariously through the video. The teacher was able to anchor new knowledge and understanding of storms, waves, and sailing ships by revisiting the video.

The Young Sherlock Project. A second anchored instruction project was designed using the movie *The Young Sherlock Holmes* as the anchor for learning. This project was conducted in fifth grade classes and designed to help students learn language arts and social studies content. The experimental group, comprised of both at-risk and average ability students, received instruction within the context of *The Young Sherlock Holmes*. The matched comparison group received the same information without the benefit of the video anchor.

The study showed that the students in the anchored group were much more likely to use new targeted vocabulary spontaneously than students in the comparison group. Furthermore, the results of the studies on writing showed that the stories written by the anchored instruction group contained many story elements and their plots were more likely to link character actions and events to goal statements and goal resolution (Risko et al., 1989). Finally, students in the anchored group were much more likely to use historical information to make inferences about the motives of characters in other turn-of-the-century stories they read and videos they saw (Kinzer & Risko, 1988).

The data from these projects, and others that are being conducted across the country, offer an opportunity to merge recent knowledge about cognition, instruction, and culture with video technology to develop instructional systems that can make significant changes in the way the teaching and learning process for at-risk students is thought about and carried out in the schools. It must be emphasized, however, that it is the merging of information from these disciplines with technology that can make a difference, not the technology itself.

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ERIC FOR PRACTITIONERS

What is the purpose of this digest?

This digest is intended to demonstrate that ERIC is a useful source of information for educational practitioners at all levels — teachers, administrators, policymakers, counselors, media staff, and support staff — as well as researchers and students.

What is ERIC?

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) began in 1966 as the Educational Research Information Center. A widening of its scope and increasing emphasis on practitioner-oriented materials led to the adoption of the current name in 1973. As its name implies, it is a collection of educational materials. It is not, however, a center, but a network consisting of 16 ERIC Clearinghouses, each of which focuses on specific facets of education or subject areas. The clearinghouses look for and actively solicit educational documents which they index, abstract, and send to the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility, which produces a magnetic tape of the input of all the clearinghouses each month. This tape is used both for computer searching and for the production of the ERIC abstract journal, *Resources in Education* (RIE). In 1969, educational journals were added to ERIC, and the results were an expanded magnetic tape and *Current Index to Journals in Education* (CIJE), a second ERIC abstract journal. The clearinghouses are scattered throughout the United States, and all operate under the aegis of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), a part of the U.S. Department of Education.

ERIC contains information on almost all aspects of education. Although it did not originally include catalogs, curriculum guides, and administrator guides, as Central ERIC (the policymaking body in the Department of Education) became aware that these types of materials were important to their ever-expanding clientele, they were added to the already existing research reports, evaluation studies, and other "fugitive" materials.

Now that ERIC is nearing its 20th birthday, the system has matured. Searchers are highly trained and sophisticated, which makes for search results that are focused and on target; materials selected for inclusion in the system go through a far more rigorous selection process than they did originally; and there is a real and concerted effort to locate and include materials specifically for educational practitioners.

The National Education Practice File Project

The National Education Practice File (NEPF) Project was designed to: (1) find out from educational practitioners the types of information that would be of value to them; (2) locate the types of materials identified by practitioners; and (3) make this information easily accessible to its audience through the development of a computerized file of practitioner-oriented materials.

A diverse group of educators was selected to participate in a Working Group which was asked to identify the types of information that practitioners would find valuable. The group included seven teachers, three school librarians, four school principals, four representatives from federal education agencies, and five representatives from national organizations that serve building level personnel. This group analyzed 35 different types of documents and recommended that the NEPF focus on 12 top priority document types: promising practices; learning activities; units of study; resource and background materials; compilations of ideas from journal articles; brief research summaries/syntheses; curriculum guides; lesson plans; fact sheets or ready reference materials; games/puzzles; annotated bibliographies; and worksheets. The group also defined criteria for selection of such documents.

During the life of the two-year project (October 1, 1982 to September 30, 1984), 14,470 documents already in the ERIC system were identified as appropriate, tagged with a new field label PRACTITIONERS, and re-entered in the ERIC files. During the project, 1,234 new practitioner-oriented documents were selected and processed. The five categories containing the largest number of materials were resource and background materials (283 documents); promising practices (246 documents); learning activities (194 documents); units of study (120 documents); and fact sheets or ready reference materials (113 documents). These new documents were also labeled and entered in the system. In the process, individual clearinghouses located dozens of new sources of potential ERIC materials.

The final phase of the project focused on testing the file and collecting data on its strengths and weaknesses in meeting the information needs of teachers and school administrators. This evaluation included a total of 563 computer searches of the file. K-12 teachers and school administrators made 51% of the search requests; the remainder of the searches were conducted for librarians, counselors, students, coordinators, consultants, professors, or persons from intermediate agencies. The top ten types of materials requested were (in rank order): research summaries; research syntheses; curriculum guides; resource materials; learning activities; annotated bibliographies; promising practices; units of study; lesson plans; and handbooks.

Results of the evaluation indicated that the types of materials identified by the Working Group were very similar to the types requested by clients at the three test sites; almost all clients were satisfied enough with the search information provided to use the system again; most users of the search services shared their information with others; and there would be a continuing demand for more practical, "how to" documents, that could be put to immediate use in the classroom or school.

Has as much emphasis been placed on practitioner documents since the completion of NEPF?

During 1984, 3,920 of the 14,247 documents announced in *Resources in Education* (RIE) were tagged as general guides; guides for use by students; guides for use by teachers; and guides for out-of-the-classroom educational planning and activities. This amounts to 27% of the total announcements for 1984, indicating a strong practitioner orientation. This trend continued during 1985, when 3,188 of the 12,803 documents announced in RIE fell into one of the practitioner categories for 25% of the total announcements.

How can practitioners access ERIC?

Several years ago, the Department of Education contracted with King Research, Inc., to study the cost and use of ERIC. This study showed that ERIC information is available at an estimated 3,269 different locations throughout the United States. Slightly more than half of these are located in institutions of higher education, and another 25% in libraries and information-providing organizations that serve elementary and secondary education; and ERIC resources are used more than 1.7 million times annually and provide clients with more than 30 million bibliographic records or primary documents. Most state departments of education provide access to ERIC; most ERIC Clearinghouses provide computer searches of the literature in their specialized subject areas; there are education information centers such as the SMERC (San Mateo Educational Resources Center) in California which provide educational information to practitioners; most college and university libraries subscribe to the ERIC abstract journals; and many academic libraries provide computer searches for their clientele. A telephone call to any state department of education will probably put an inquirer into contact with a source for accessing ERIC.

Conclusions

The information obtained through the NEPF and its activities, together with subsequent statistics, indicate that ERIC is indeed a powerful and useful system for disseminating needed information to the educational community, and could be an important tool in the national push for excellence in education.

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ERIC DIGEST

May 1988

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ERIC ON CD-ROM: UPDATE

Three vendors are currently delivering CD-ROM (compact disk-read only memory) versions of the ERIC database. This digest will review these products and present information for comparison. No attempt is made to recommend any one product.

Advantages of CD-ROM Use

The mass storage capability of CD-ROM enables libraries and information centers to offer in-house access to large databases formerly available only in print or online. A compact disk can hold about 550 megabytes of data, or the equivalent of 1,500 standard floppy disks or 275,000 pages of information. The entire ERIC database, with its 22 years of citations and indexes, fits on as few as two compact disks.

Because CD-ROM databases are available on a set-fee subscription basis, and CD-ROM systems are self-contained microcomputer-based workstations, institutions can directly predict and control the costs of offering database access without the mainframe connect or communication costs of online services. The more a CD-ROM is searched, the lower the cost is per search. CD-ROM systems allow end-users to do their own searching, thus freeing time for staff members. End-users are able to obtain information directly and to take the time to browse, usually at little or no charge.

Disadvantages of CD-ROM Use

A frequently cited disadvantage of CD-ROM databases is the frequency of update. The ERIC products currently available are updated quarterly. Near the end of an update period, the most recent three months of information are missing. Depending on the information need, this may necessitate supplementing the CD-ROM search with an online search.

Other disadvantages are that one vendor's search software will not read other vendors' CD-ROMs, and that only one user at a time can access a disk. While it seems unlikely that these problems will soon be overcome, other technical improvements are being made. Among these are multi-disk-drive configurations that eliminate the need to switch disks during a search, and local area networks that allow users to access databases from remote sites.

ERIC CD-ROM Systems

Dialog, OCLC, and SilverPlatter are the three vendors now delivering CD-ROM versions of the ERIC database. All three systems offer the entire ERIC database of records from the *Current Index to Journals in Education* (CIJE) and *Resources in Education* (RIE), from 1966 to the present. Each vendor also offers access to at least one other database related to education. The software packages all provide:

- menu-driven operations;
- context-sensitive help screens (accessible at any point during search);
- default free-text searching (automatic searching of entire record);
- index field qualification (specific searching by author, title, etc.);
- browsable index display;
- single-keystroke copying of search terms from index to query;
- right truncation (searching from partial terms);
- Boolean logic (AND, OR, NOT operators);
- proximity and range searching;
- options for forming, modifying, or combining search strategies;
- options for tracking and saving search strategies;
- retrieval of records in reverse chronological order;
- flexible display and print formats (full or partial records);
- downloading of results to hard or floppy disk;
- compatibility of downloaded results with word processors;
- printing all or selected results; and
- user support, including print documentation and toll-free hotline.

The brief descriptions that follow concentrate primarily on differences among the three ERIC CD-ROM products.

DIALOG OnDisc ERIC

OnDisc ERIC contains the entire ERIC database, RIE and CIJE combined, on two compact disks. An important feature of the software is that it allows users to transfer to DIALOG online to continue a search in the most recent portion of the database. This feature also facilitates access to DIALOG databases that complement ERIC, including PsycINFO, Exceptional Child Education Resources, and Social SCISEARCH. The same software works with DIALOG's other CD-ROM products.

OnDisc search software has two modes of use: Command Search for those already familiar with DIALOG online command language, and Easy Menu Search for novice users. The menu mode walks users through a series of well-designed steps from selecting the search field to downloading and printing the resulting records. In both command and menu search modes, more than 20 separate field indexes can be searched, including author, subject, descriptor terms, journal, year, language, document type, and ERIC accession number. The complete *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors* is also searchable. An expand function allows the user to browse related terms in any index.

The system sorts search results in two sets by type (CIJE and RIE), then subsorts the sets to display the most recent records first. The user can further sort results by any index field, and choose from five display or print formats in the menu search mode, or eight in command search mode.

In addition to easily accessible help screens, the comprehensive print documentation contains sections on each search mode and on ERIC and other DIALOG databases, plus a quick reference guide and demo floppy disk. Other DIALOG resources, available separately, include the large general manual on DIALOG command searching, training seminars for novice and experienced users, and videotape instructional modules for classroom use.

OCLC Search CD450

The Search CD450 Education Series contains the ERIC database on four disks and the Education Materials in Libraries (EMIL) database on a fifth disk. The RIE and CIJE portions of the ERIC database are filed separately. EMIL is a 450,000-record subset of the OCLC Online Union Catalog. The same software also searches other OCLC CD-ROM databases.

The Search CD450 user interface is designed with enough flexibility to accommodate both novice and expert users. The screen is divided into three windows: query entry, results tally, and record display. Basic user options are displayed across the bottom of each window at all times as function-key values. Additional windows are overlaid on the standard display when requested. These include help information, fields menu, index display, search history, and menus of display, print, and save options.

The Search CD450 system offers many search fields combined in a single browsable index, but without the expand option. The search history feature allows the user to study previous search strategies and modify or re-execute them. All records retrieved are displayed in reverse order by ERIC accession number. This is the only sort feature available. A menu offers three predetermined display and print formats. The institution can control and customize many features for the end-user, including which fields will be searched with a particular qualifier, what and how records will be displayed, where records will be stored, and the maximum number that can be stored or printed with a single command. Display formats and help screens can also be customized and expanded, using any word processor, to meet the needs and skill levels of users.

Besides easily accessible onscreen help, print documentation with quick reference guide and database fact sheet, and hotline, user support is available through OCLC-affiliated regional networks. For novices, the "getting started" help screen and a demo floppy disk are useful.

A new version of the OCLC education series, to be released in August 1988, will consist of four instead of five disks. Among its many enhancements are separate field indexes and a feature that allows users to preview results by author and title, then choose and sort them in order of interest. A version of the system planned for early 1989 will offer online link capability, the ERIC thesaurus, and the ability to sort results by field.

SilverPlatter ERIC

SilverPlatter fits the ERIC database, RIE and CIJE combined, on three CD-ROMs. The current disk is available on an annual as well as a quarterly update basis. Other CD-ROM databases available through SilverPlatter include PsycLIT (Psychological Abstracts), Sociofile (Sociological Abstracts), LISA (Library and Information Science Abstracts), A-V Online (NICEM database), and Peterson's college databases.

The system, which boots up in the FIND mode, is controlled by 14 commands, 10 of which are activated by function keys. Besides free-text searching, there are 16 field indexes, including availability, target audience, and grade level. Major and minor descriptors and identifiers can be searched separately. An expand option lets the user see related terms. A lateral searching feature allows users to select one or more entries from the index, or one or more terms or phrases from a record displayed on the screen, and have the system automatically perform a search on the selection. Editing functions allow the user to modify search strategies.

SilverPlatter sorts search results into two sets by type (CIJE and RIE), then further sorts the two sets so the most recent citations are displayed first. No additional sort capability is offered. The default for screen display or printing is the whole record, but the user can type in other format choices by fields. The system operator or end-user can also set a limit on the number of records to display or print.

The system offers much instructional information to users, including easily accessible help screens, onscreen guides to specific database features and search strategy, and both onscreen and print tutorials. A quick reference guide will soon be released.

Summary

The marketing environment for CD-ROM technologies is very competitive. The three vendors currently offering the ERIC database have all enhanced their products in the past year, to the point where search capabilities, fees, and hardware requirements are becoming more consistent. The database is the same regardless of vendor. DIALOG OnDisc includes the database on the fewest compact disks, adds the ERIC thesaurus as an index choice, and offers the option of online searching for the most recent data. OCLC will offer the thesaurus and a number of new search capabilities later this year.

The search software for all three systems is quite sophisticated, but each system has special features. Among these are DIALOG's two search modes, OCLC's window displays, and SilverPlatter's tutorial. DIALOG appears to offer the most flexibility in the user's ability to sort results, and OCLC in the institution's ability to customize the system. The user support by all three vendors is thorough, but DIALOG's is broadest based in view of its existing schedule of training seminars and its classroom instruction modules.

Hardware requirements for the three systems are similar, but SilverPlatter is the only system that does not require a hard drive for the microcomputer and does not offer color display.

Investing in a CD-ROM database system is a complex decision that requires consideration of individual institutional and user needs as well as software capabilities, the potential of a system to offer access to other databases, and hardware requirements. All three vendors offer subscription rates that include quarterly updates, software enhancements, printed documentation, and toll-free hotlines. SilverPlatter also offers annual updates for a lower fee, plus a one-time instead of an annual fee for archival disks. All the vendors offer some form of hardware purchase or lease agreement, or upgrade/starter kit. When making comparisons, contact vendors directly, as well as other institutions that are currently using these systems.

For Further Information

DIALOG OnDisc ERIC
Marketing Department, Dialog Information Services, Inc.
3460 Hillview Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94303
800-3 DIALOG (800-334-2564), 415-858-3785

OCLC Search CD450
Online Computer Library Center
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SilverPlatter
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HIGHLIGHTS ...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Ethical and Legal Issues in School Counseling

Introduction

School counselors often ask questions such as, "What should I have done in that situation?" or "Did I do the right thing?" This desire for information and feedback regarding difficult cases was reiterated by respondents to a *Membership Survey* conducted by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) in 1988, wherein the need for ethics information was ranked among the top concerns. Why are we seeing this ongoing interest in ethical and legal issues? Why are we seeing an increase in the literature in these areas? It is hoped that the counseling profession as a whole is becoming more aware of, and sensitive to, the need for ethical practice; that is, the importance of practicing ethically within the law. Perhaps the increase in litigation involving educators and mental health practitioners is a factor. Certainly the laws are changing or at least are being interpreted differently, requiring counselors to stay up-to-date. The process of decision-making and some of the more complex issues in ethical and legal areas are summarized in this digest.

Ethical decisions are usually not clear-cut; they tend to be in the "gray areas" rather than in "black and white." Furthermore, the "right" answer in one situation is not necessarily the "right" answer in a similar case at another time. As society changes, the issues change; and, indeed, as counselors change, their perspectives change. If we understand and accept the fact that ultimately counselors will have to struggle with themselves to determine the appropriate action in each situation, then we realize the importance of ethical and legal awareness and sensitivity. We then also understand the need for periodic re-examination of the issues throughout our professional lives (Huey & Remley, 1988).

Ethical Standards

The importance of knowing the contents of professional codes of conduct and the purposes and limitations of such codes is essential to the understanding of ethical and legal issues in school counseling. Although detailed memorization of the ethical codes is not required, school counselors should have at least a basic understanding of their ethical responsibilities as defined in these documents (Huey, 1987).

The ethical standards of ASCA and the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD) present school counselors with the behaviors to which they should aspire and give general guidelines for addressing difficult issues. They do not, however, necessarily provide answers to the many specific dilemmas that practitioners will face. When the standards do not provide enough direction, counselors are encouraged to consult with colleagues, professional experts, and perhaps their administrative supervisors before taking action.

Almost all professionals, at some point in their career, suspect or become aware of a colleague's unethical behavior. School counselors are obligated to address any conduct by a colleague that could cause harm to clients. Counselors should: (a) try to resolve the issue by confronting the colleague directly, if possible; (b) report the behavior to a superior, professional association, or credentialing authority if a direct confrontation is not possible or is not effective; and (c) take steps to protect any vulnerable clients.

Privacy, Confidentiality, and Privileged Communication

Confidentiality and privileged communication are two related issues that school counselors often confuse. Information clients relate to school counselors should be kept confidential with the following general exceptions: (a) the client is a danger to self or others; (b) the client or parent requests that information be related to a third party; or, (c) a court orders a counselor to disclose information.

Although all school counselors have a confidentiality responsibility, very few relationships with students are considered privileged. Privileged communication is granted only by statute and guarantees clients that a court cannot compel a counselor to disclose information related in confidence. Such statutory privileges belong to clients rather than to counselors, and most states do not grant privileged communication in school counseling relationships.

Legal Issues

Legal standards of practice are different from ethical standards. Generally, legal standards are related to accepted professional practices in the community while ethical standards tend to be idealistic.

Many schools have policies that differentiate between the rights of custodial and noncustodial parents, and school counselors are often required to implement such policies. The law is clear that, barring a specific court order to the contrary, noncustodial parents have all rights regarding their children except the right to have custody of the children permanently in their homes.

When federal legislation known as the 1978 Hatch Amendment was passed and revised regulations were issued in 1984, a great deal of misinterpretation occurred that inhibited the offering of school counseling services. Eventually it was realized that the amendment's requirement of written parental consent for children to participate in certain school programs covered only a narrow range of activities that were federally funded, were experimental in nature, and involved psychological tests or treatment.

School counselors often play a major role in administering the school's testing program. School counselors should

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provide expert advice to school policymakers regarding the appropriate use of tests. Counselors should assist in evaluating each test to determine whether it: (1) discriminates in any way against any segment of the school population, (2) is valid and reliable, (3) is appropriate for the purposes for which it is being used, and (4) is necessary to achieve the school's objectives. Moreover, the counselor is responsible for interpreting test results for students in a clear and understandable manner.

The laws regarding abortions for minors are changing (Talbutt, 1983). Generally, school counselors may discuss a student's decision of whether to seek an abortion with the student, but they should also encourage parental involvement when possible. Each case must be decided individually based on the facts as presented.

The School Counselor and Child Abuse

In most states, school counselors are obligated to report suspected cases of child abuse. While the mandate is clear, issues must be resolved such as appropriate reporting procedures, relationships with investigators and prosecutors, and appropriate interactions with the family.

Ethical Issues In Group Work

Group counseling presents ethical issues not found in individual interventions with clients. The advantages of a comprehensive group counseling program are numerous; however, school counselors who direct such programs need to be familiar with potential ethical problems.

Although group counseling in general presents special problems, providing group counseling for children introduces issues not found when working with adults. Although the ASCA *Ethical Standards for School Counselors* (1984) does not directly address group counseling, some specific guidelines are found in the AACD *Ethical Standards* (1988). The ASGW *Ethical Guidelines for Group Counselors* (1989) provides additional direction.

Special Issues

Computers. School counseling offices are increasingly utilizing computers and computer products. School counselors have made attempts to understand and utilize this modern technology, but many counselors are still unaware of the ethical issues involved in the use of computers. It is imperative that professional associations develop ethical standards regarding computer use. Moreover, the importance of direct counselor-client contact in conjunction with the use of computers must be stressed.

Cultural diversity. School counselors have a responsibility to provide services for all students, including those from other cultures. The counseling profession is a Western culture phenomenon; however, school counselors constantly interact with families and children who speak languages other than English, adhere to values different from those of the counselor, and conform to social expectations that may seem odd to the American school environment. The unique ethical issues involved in counseling multicultural populations need to be addressed.

Research. There is an increasing demand for school counselors to engage in field-based research. Documenting program effectiveness can do more to promote school counseling than all public relations efforts combined. But even if school counselors never conduct research themselves, they need to know the rights of students involved in research projects, the responsibilities of researchers, and other research-related ethical issues.

Sexual Intimacy. Perhaps the most pressing ethical problem in the counseling profession is sexual intimacy with clients. School counselors are involved less often in sexual relationships with clients than are their colleagues who counsel adults. Nevertheless, clients, no matter what their age, often introduce sexual dimensions into the counseling relationship. Counselors who are faced with sex and intimacy boundary issues in their professional counseling roles must respond in a manner that is consistent with ethical guidelines.

Conclusion

An interactive dialogue about ethical dilemmas generally provides the best framework for learning and professional growth (Larrabee & Terres, 1985). State departments of education, local school systems, and counselor education departments are strongly encouraged to offer courses, workshops, and programs on ethical and legal issues. The ASCA Ethics Committee is available as a resource to help plan and implement such programs. Inquiries should be addressed to the ASCA Ethics Committee, American School Counselor Association, 5999 Stevenson Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304.

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ERIC DIGEST

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Family Caregiving

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Demographics and Aging Trends

In the past 20 years, the older population in America has grown twice as quickly as all other age groups. Just as the population in general is aging, the older population itself is aging. The 85 and older age group is expected to be seven times its present size by the year 2050 (U.S. Select Committee on Aging, 1988). This population trend, which could result in a large number of frail elderly people in need of caregiving services, is accompanied by several other trends which suggest that caregiving may become more difficult to provide in the future.

The most commonly cited of these trends are an increase in life expectancy, a decrease in the birth rate, and an increase in the participation of women in the labor force (Montgomery & Borgatta, 1989; Pratt & Kethley, 1988; Wisendale & Allison, 1988). The increased life expectancy may result in caregivers themselves being older adults. Individuals in their sixties or seventies may find themselves being the primary caregivers for parents or other relatives in their eighties and nineties. The increase in childlessness and the trend toward having fewer children will result in fewer adult children to care for a greater number of older adults in the future. The trend toward more women being employed leaves these traditional caregivers little time to care for an elderly relative in addition to other responsibilities. The increased divorce rate and the geographic mobility and dispersion of families will also make it difficult for families to provide the care needed by the elderly.

In spite of available formal services, informal caregivers continue to provide the majority of long-term care to older adults and family care is recognized as a critical factor in preventing or delaying nursing home placement (U.S. Select Committee on Aging, 1988). It is estimated that 80% of care for older adults is provided by their families (Pilisuk & Parks, 1988).

Caregiver Profile

Although anyone can become a caregiver, caregivers tend to be women who are approximately 57 years old (U.S. Select Committee on Aging, 1988). Adult children caring for a parent tend to be between 40 and 59 years old. Most are married women with families of their own. An estimated 44% of caregiving daughters and 55% of caregiving sons are employed (Blieszner & Alley, 1990). These statistics suggest that many adult children caring for their parents have family and work obligations that may conflict with caregiving responsibilities. Caregiving spouses tend to be in their late 60s and 70s. When compared to the general population, caregivers are less likely to be employed and more likely to be poor or near poor and in fair to poor health (U.S. Select Committee on Aging, 1988). The majority of caregivers have been providing care for 1–4 years; 80% of family caregivers provide unpaid assistance seven days a week and primary caregivers report spending between four and six hours a day in caregiving duties (Pilisuk & Parks, 1988; Stone, Cafferata & Sangl, 1987).

Caregiver Burden

Distinctions are often made between objective and subjective caregiver burden (Montgomery, Gonyea & Hooyman, 1985) or between caregiver burden and stress (Pilisuk & Parks, 1988), with objective burden referring to management of tasks to be performed and subjective burden or stress referring to the appraisal of the strain on the caregiver. Both burden and stress must be examined to assess the effects of caregiving on the caregiver.

Caregiving is a time-consuming responsibility which inflicts various limitations on the caregiver's personal life. Confinement has been cited as the most stressful infringement on the caregiver's lifestyle (Bliesner & Alley, 1990; Montgomery, Gonyea & Hooyman, 1985). Restriction of one's social life is the most frequently cited problem among caregivers of moderately and severely impaired persons (U.S. Select Committee on Aging, 1988). Role conflict resulting from the competing demands of the care recipient, other family obligations, and employment responsibilities is often a major complaint of caregivers.

In addition to competing roles, many caregivers must adjust to a new role. Becoming a caregiver results in a change in the former relationship between the caregiver and the care recipient (Blieszner & Alley, 1990).

Seventy-seven percent of employed women who also provide care reported experiencing a conflict between work and caregiving demands, and 35% believed that being a caregiver adversely affected their work (Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., 1988).

The emotional and physical demands of the care recipient can also cause stress among caregivers. Caregivers experience more stress if the care recipient's impairment results in disruptive behavior and improper social functioning (Blieszner & Alley, 1990). Several studies have shown that the degree of caregiver stress increases as the care recipient's level of functional impairment becomes more severe (U.S. Select Committee on Aging, 1988).

Many caregivers experience problems with the physical demands of caregiving. Some report difficulty in lifting or moving their care recipient, others report difficulty in performing personal care tasks. Barusch's study (1988) of elderly spouse caregivers found that the most prevalent problems experienced by caregivers involved the cognitive aspects of caregiving. Caregiving spouses reported grief over the loss of the spouse they once knew. Seventy-six percent reported worrying about their own health and what would happen if they became ill. Many expressed some form of generalized anxiety about the future. Sixty-seven percent reported feeling depressed.

Many caregivers report family conflict and the loss of friends and activities as a result of caregiving. The emotional and physical strains of caregiving often lead to deterioration in the caregiver's own health. Although caregivers report physical, financial, and family strains associated with caregiving, the most negative consequences of caregiving on caregivers seem to be the emotional strain of caregiver burdens.

How Caregivers Cope

The most common coping response of the caregiving spouses studied by Barusch (1988) was to seek help when they had problems, especially in the areas of care management and health problems. The second most common coping response was to simply not cope. Spouses reported not coping with sexual problems, guilt feelings, feeling their spouse was overly dependent, arguments with their spouse, excessive demands made by others, worries about future financial problems, managing money, and worries about their own health. Another study found that 12% of caregivers drank alcohol to cope with the psychological strains of caregiving (Bureau of National Affairs, Inc., 1988).

Effective Coping Strategies

Interventions designed to help caregivers cope with caregiver burden and stress have focused on individual coping strategies, respite services, and support groups and other group interventions. Results from studies evaluating the effectiveness of different interventions have been equivocal.

Individual Coping Strategies. Caregivers themselves report having the most success when they could somehow change a stressful situation and reported highest levels of satisfaction when they could change it alone (Barusch, 1988).

Respite Care. Compared with caregivers receiving no respite care, caregivers of Alzheimer's patients who had formal respite care were able to keep their relatives out of institutions for a longer time (Lawton, Brody & Saperstein, 1989). Participants reported high levels of satisfaction with respite services, yet respite neither alleviated caregiver burden nor promoted caregiver mental health significantly. A program which provided adult day care services to older adults with dementia did report a reduction of caregiver burden (Eddowes, 1989).

Group Interventions. One study of a group intervention for family caregivers of dementia patients showed that, at post-treatment, caregivers who received the intervention showed no greater change in caregiver depression, life satisfaction, coping, or social activity than did caregivers on a waiting list who received no intervention (Haley, 1989).

In one study, individuals caring for impaired elderly relatives were assigned to either a waiting-list control group or to one of five treatment groups that received different combinations of services, including seminars for caregivers, support groups, family consultation services, and respite care. One interesting finding from this study was the reluctance of participants to use services. In spite of free access to services and encouragement to use services, almost one-third of caregivers did not use services (Montgomery & Borgatta, 1989).

Challenges to Helping Caregivers

The reluctance of family caregivers to use services for which they are eligible and the preference of caregivers to solve problems on their own present challenges to those trying to provide services to family caregivers. Caregivers who have little time to meet their family, work, and caregiving responsibilities often feel they do not have any time left for support groups or other interventions. Simply locating family caregivers in need of support and getting them to accept such support may prove difficult. Many family caregivers do not seek outside help until they have reached a crisis point.

The literature has illustrated that a variety of coping skills are often needed by caregivers in order to deal with a variety of problems. Barusch (1988) recommends that training programs teach techniques for personal control in order to help caregivers cope without outside help, but also provide information about community resources and discuss caregiver feelings about seeking and accepting help in an effort to prepare the caregivers for a time when they may be unable to cope alone.

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OVERVIEW

ERIC DIGEST NO.56

Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

FAMILY INFLUENCES ON EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

The influence of family on occupational and educational attainment has been a subject of great interest to vocational and career educators and researchers alike. As is evident from a literature review done by Otto and Call (1985), researchers in such diverse fields as child development, sociology, demography, and career development have long recognized that families play a major role in shaping their children's educational and career decisions. Only when career educators understand the nature and extent of the family's influence on employment and education can they develop effective strategies for helping parents help their children make appropriate and satisfying career and educational choices. This *Overview* summarizes information about the family's influence on employment and education and describes intervention strategies for practitioners and parents to use in assisting youth in reaching their full educational and employment potential.

How Does the Family Influence Occupational/Educational Attainment and Choice?

Splete and Freeman-George (1985) list the following significant family influence factors that affect a child's career and educational decisions: (1) geographic location, (2) genetic inheritance, (3) family background, (4) socioeconomic status, (5) family composition, (6) parenting style, and (7) parent work-related attitudes. Whereas the first four of these factors have a strong influence on a child's physical and mental abilities, education and employment opportunities, and financial resources, the last three have a profound effect on a child's personality type, preference for certain types of interpersonal relationships, work attitudes, and willingness to pursue a nontraditional career.

It is also important to remember that the career development process begins long before the adult years. McDaniel and Hummel (1984) discuss the career development process in terms of three phases: awareness (before age 11), exploration (ages 11 to 17), and preparation (age 17 to young adulthood). In her study of the family-career connection, Miller (1984) discusses career development in terms of a process beginning in the preschool year and reviews the effects of parents as role models in the career decisions of sons and daughters.

Why Are Family-Oriented Career Development Programs Needed?

The aforementioned discussion of the documented influence of parents on their children's career and educational choices and the importance of parental role models are obvious answers to this question. In a 1980 speech, Becky L. Schergens, then executive director of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, discussed yet another reason for family-oriented career development programs. Recognizing that parents play a central role in their children's career development and that parents indirectly help their children by helping themselves, Schergens asserts that "parents must work with their children not only in the discussion of a selection of a career but also in terms of sharpening their own employability skills" (p. 4). She places particular emphasis on the need for parents to teach and reinforce the need for adaptability and flexibility in this world of rapid change.

What Specific Kinds of Programs Are Needed?

Schergens suggests that a parent's effectiveness as a resource person on which a child can draw in the career development process is directly dependent upon the parent's own career development and knowledge of the world of work. Therefore, a variety of different programs, each focusing on audience-specific needs, are required. Otto (1983) discusses the occupational outlook for the different regions of the United States and the various offerings available at postsecondary institutions. Gormley (1983) describes an audiovisual/print prevocational education program designed to meet the special needs of bilingual junior high students and their parents. The program features home learning activities focusing on developing prevocational skills, making free time pay off, making the most of oneself, and developing appropriate work attitudes and behavior. Another program intended to train parents to train their special needs children in making the transition from school to career is that outlined in the package entitled *Corridors to Careers: A Guide for Parents and Disabled Youth* (Izzo, Kopp, and Liming 1986). This training program for parents of disabled youth features—

- parent guides covering career exploration and planning for transition through the Individualized Education Program (IEP) (assessing interests and abilities, learning what appropriate jobs are available, understanding training options, and identifying modifications needed at the work site);
- job search and survival skills (obtaining job leads, writing application letters and resumes, interviewing, and developing good work habits);
- independent living skills (identifying transportation and housing needs and options, developing home management and decision-making skills, and building interpersonal skills).

The package also includes a trainer's manual explaining ways in which parent training teams can teach other parents to play a supportive role in the school-to-work transition of their own disabled adolescents.

How Can Practitioners Meet the Need for Family-Oriented Career Development?

One way of responding to the need for family-oriented career education is to follow Schergens' (1980) suggestion and help parents become better "career counselors" by helping them develop their own employability skills. Another important role

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of parent education is to address the unique needs of parents of different groups of special needs children. Splete and Freeman-George (1985) outline a comprehensive plan for counselor interventions that revolves around helping young adults recognize the influences of family and increase their personal autonomy through a three-step exploration of self, educational/occupational information, and relationships with family and significant others. Representative interventions in the model include making a family systems review, developing paradigms of family interaction, and making an occupational family tree.

What Steps Can Parents Take on Their Own?

Schergens (1980) sees a dual role for parents in the career development process: as guides or resource persons for their own children and as advocates for increased opportunities in the area of career education for all children, with emphasis on the impact that parents can have at the community, state, and local levels. Stressing the importance of the parent as a provider of information and experiences conducive to the formation of proper school and work attitudes, McDaniels and Hummel (1984) list 13 steps that parents can take to assist in their children's career development. These include encouraging the development of such basic work attitudes as promptness, respect, and responsibility; stressing that the work children do in school is good, important, and related to the larger world of work; helping children understand that no one individual can be completely competent in all things; providing a climate conducive to study; serving as the connecting link between home and school; and encouraging participation in diverse experiences outside of school, including leisure activities and part-time jobs.

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ERIC Clearinghouse on Tests, Measurement, and Evaluation
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Finding Information About Standardized Tests

by Lawrence M. Rudner and Kathryn Dorko

Finding the right standardized achievement or aptitude test can be quite difficult. You need to identify a variety of potentially useful tests, collect and review technical materials, and identify and evaluate the practical considerations of using these tests.

This digest is designed to help you with the first step -- identifying useful standardized tests. In this digest, we describe

- books that describe available tests,
- test reviews,
- online information retrieval systems, and
- other sources for testing information.

The printed sources are available in most academic libraries. These sources only contain brief information about individual tests. They do not contain copies of the tests themselves. You will probably want to contact test publishers for more detailed information.

Books that Describe Available Tests

The following books have basic, non-evaluative information about a wide range of available tests. All include statements about intended audience, date, scoring, author, costs, and publisher.

- Mitchell, James V. Jr. (ed.), *Tests in Print III (TIP III): An Index to Tests, Test Reviews, and the Literature on Specific Tests.* Buros Institute of Mental Measurements, University of Nebraska Press, 901 North 17th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68588-0520, (402) 472-3581, 1983, 714 pages.

  Tests in Print describes more than 2,400 published tests. It also contains more than 16,000 references about specific tests, a cumulative name index for each test that covers all references in *TIP III* and the nine *Mental Measurements Yearbooks (MMY)*, a directory of test publishers with all the tests of each publisher listed, a title index that covers all tests in print and all out-of-print tests once listed in *MMY*, a name index to authors of more than 70,000 documents (tests, reviews, excerpts, and references) in the nine *MMYs* and *TIP III,* and a scanning index for quickly finding tests that are designed for particular populations.

- Keyser, Daniel J., and Sweetland, Richard C. (eds.), *Tests: A Comprehensive Reference for Assessment in Psychology, Education, and Business (2nd ed.).* Test Corporation of America, 4050 Pennsylvania, Suite 310, Kansas City, Missouri 64112, (816) 756-1490, 1986, 1,296 pages.

  This book concisely describes more than 3,100 published tests in a "quick-scanning, easy-to-read" format. It gives a brief description and information about the population targeted by the test, the purpose, and administrative and publication information.

- *The Educational Testing Service Test Collection Catalog, Volume I: Achievement Tests and Measurement Devices.* Oryx Press, 2214 North Central Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85004-1483, (800) 457-6799, 1986, 296 pages.

  This catalog gives information about more than 2,000 achievement tests in the ETS Test Collection. It indexes tests by author, title, and subject category.

- Krug, Samuel E. (ed.), *Psychware Sourcebook 1988-1989. Test Corporation of America, 1988, 640 pages.*

  This book describes 450 computer-based products used in psychology, education, and business. Most products go beyond simple test scoring and involve administration and report generation. The book has five indeses: Test Title, Product Category, Product Application, Service, and Supplier.

- Pletcher, Barbara P., Locks, Nancy A., Reynolds, Dorothy F., and Sisson, Bonnie G. *A Guide to Assessment Instruments for Limited English Speaking Students.* Santilla Publishing Company, New York. Out-of-print. Available through ERIC Document

American Institutes for Research, 3333 K Street, NW Suite 300, Washington, DC 20007 (202) 342-5060

Reproduction Service, 3900 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia 22304 (800) 227-3742, TM 011 805, 1977, 223 pages.

While somewhat dated, this reference gives you leads to assessment instruments for native speakers of Chinese, French, Italian, Navajo, Portuguese, Spanish, and Tagalog. The instruments listed in this guide were designed for use with students in K-6 and were normed with students in the U.S. Descriptive, technical, cultural, and linguistic information is given for about 400 tests.

Test Reviews

Several major books give in-depth, candid reviews of available tests. The best-known books are:

- Mitchell, James V. Jr. (ed.) *The Ninth Mental Measurement Yearbook.* Buros Institute of Mental Measurements, 1985, 2,002 pages.

  The *Yearbooks*, published periodically since 1932, are a comprehensive source of factual and evaluative information about commercially available tests. *The Ninth Mental Measurement Yearbook*, contains information about 1,400 tests and includes 1,266 original reviews. In addition to descriptive information and test reviews, this book has bibliographic references to studies and articles about specific instruments, and a current directory of test publishers.

- Keyser, Daniel J., and Sweetland, Richard C. (eds.), *Test Critiques.* Test Corporation of America, Volume I, 1985, 800 pages; Volume II, 1985, 872 pages; Volume III, 1985, 784 pages; Volume IV, 1986, 768 pages; Volume V, 1986, 608 pages; Volume VI, 1987, 712 pages.

  Test Critiques emphasizes the practical aspects of test administration. Each review in this series has an introduction, practical applications, technical aspects, and an overall critique of the test.

Online Information Retrieval Systems

Identifying and searching test information can be done quickly and efficiently through the online database system managed by Bibliographic Retrieval Services (BRS), 1200 Route 7, Lantham, New York, 12110, (800) 468-0908.

BRS provides sophisticated search routines and access to databases that contain test information. You or your librarian can search by test title, parts of a title, subject, purpose, availability, grade level, or any combination of these and other descriptors. The following testing databases are available:

The Educational Testing Service File (ETSF)

This is an online index to the tests contained in the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Test Collection. Developed to support the work of ETS test development staff, the ETS Test Collection has more than 14,000 commercial and unpublished tests. More than 8,000 tests that are currently available are in the ETSF.

Mental Measurements Yearbook Database (MMYD)

This is an online index to 1,400 tests and reviews covered in the *Mental Measurement Yearbooks.* Although considerably smaller than the ETSF database, the MMYD has more detailed information about each test and more information that can be searched.

Other Sources for Testing Information

Other sources for testing information are described in:

- Fabiano, Emily, and O'Brien, Nancy. *Testing Information Sources for Educators.* ERIC Clearinghouse on Tests, Measurement and Evaluation, American Institutes for Research, 3333 K Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20007, (202) 342-5060, Report TME-94, 1987, 61 pages.

  This is a guide to more than 150 books, journals, indexes, and computer-based services and organizations that provide information about student assessment. It also includes a subject index.

- Crosby-Muilenburg, Corryn. *Psychological and Educational Tests: A Selective Annotated Guide.* ERIC Document Reproduction Service (TM 011 545), 1988, 35 pages.

  Developed as a guide to the extensive measurement resources available to patrons of the Humbolt State University Library (Arcata, CA), this report identifies a wide range of books, reports, and journals about tests. It includes an extensive listing of references within specific disciplines, such as special education, counseling, and early childhood.

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ERIC Clearinghouse on Tests, Measurement, and Evaluation Digest No. 110, March 1989

Finding Non-Commercial Tests

by Corryn Crosby-Muilenburg, Humbolt (CA), State University Library

While a wide range of commercial tests are available to assess growth in knowledge and cognitive skills (see ERIC/TM Digest #5), program evaluation and research in education can often benefit by assessing other characteristics that students may bring to the program or may acquire as a result of the program. Student attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and indicators of psychological well-being, for example, can supplement measures of academic achievement.

Proven, commercially available tests are not always available to measure these special characteristics of students. This digest is designed to help you identify potentially useful tests and other assessment instruments from sources other than commercial test vendors. In this digest, we describe

- guides to sources of non-commercial tests and
- compilations of non-commercial tests.

In many cases, the non-commercial tests described in these guides and compilations have been used in published research studies. Often, reliability and validity information is available. You may find these instruments helpful either as they are or as input when developing your own instruments.

Guides to Sources of Non-Commercial Tests

Chun, Ki-Taek, et al. *Measures for Psychological Assessment: A Guide to 3,000 Original Sources and Their Applications.* Ann Arbor: Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, 1975 (BF 698.5 C45).

This extensive bibliography of 3,000 non-commercial, informal, and ad hoc instruments has two major sections: (1) primary references from 26 journals published between 1960 and 1970 in which the tests were first discussed; and (2) applications of the tests that identify significant research in which the instruments were incorporated. An author index and a descriptor index are included.

The ETS Collection Catalog: *Achievement Tests and Measurement Devices.* Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1986, 1988 (LB 3051).

This series is based on the Educational Testing Service's test collection database of more than 15,000 commercial and non-commercial tests. The 2,000 or so achievement tests listed in Volume 1 are indexed by subject (including population), author, and title. Volume 2 describes 1,400 vocational measures for all ages and grade levels. Information includes title, personal or institutional author, publication date, availability, source, target audience, notes on testing time, number of items, subtests, and an abstract. Some of these tests are part of the ETS *Tests in Microfiche* collection.

Goldman, Bert A. and Saunders, John L. *Directory of Unpublished Experimental Mental Measures. Vols. 1-4* NY: Human Sciences Press, 1974 (BF 431 G625).

This four-volume set provides references to nonstandardized, experimental mental measures (tests that are not currently marketed commercially). It catalogs tests that are available in 46 journals. Instruments are not evaluated, but brief descriptions, reliability and validity data, the sources, and related research information are provided. Measures are grouped in 23 categories. A comprehensive subject index (for Vols. 1-4) is provided in Volume 4.

Johnson, Orval G. *Tests and Measurements in Child Development: Handbooks I and II.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1971 & 1976 (BF 722 J64 and BF 722 J645).

Handbook I describes 300 unpublished measures of child behavior from birth to 12 years. Descriptions include: author, age of target population, variable measured, source of measure, brief summary with sample items, reliability and validity information, and

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a bibliography. This volume contains an author index, a measure index, a subject index, and a general index.

Handbook II describes an additional 900 unpublished measures of child behavior from birth to age 18. Administration, norms, validity and reliability information, target population, and bibliographic information are included. This handbook contains author and subject indexes.

Compilations of Non-Commercial Tests

Cook, John D., et al. *The Experience of Work: A Compendium and Review of 249 Measures and Their Use.* NY: Academic Press, 1981 (HF 5549.5 A83 E9 1981).

This book contains 249 measures of work, including leadership style, overall job satisfaction, specific satisfactions, alienation and commitment, and work values. Each section is introduced by a bibliographic essay outlining research use of the instruments. The book also has an extensive bibliography and an index of scales and sub-scales.

Corcoran, Kevin, and Fischer, Joel. *Measures for Clinical Practice: A Sourcebook.* NY: Free Press, 1987 (BF 176 C66 1987).

This book provides descriptions of rapid assessment instruments that practitioners can use to measure problems that are common to clinical practice. Instruments are short, easy to score, and easy to administer. Measures are divided into three sections: instruments for adults, for children, and for couples and families. For each instrument, availability information, the primary reference, norms, reliability and validity information, and scoring information are provided.

Hudson, W. W. *The Clinical Measurement Package: A Field Manual.* Homewood, Il: Dorsey Press (RC 469 H83 1982).

This book contains nine short-form scales designed to monitor and evaluate progress in therapy. Depression, self-esteem, marital discord, sexual discord, parent-child relationships, intrafamiliar stress, and peer relationships are measured. Administration information, scoring information, reliability data, and validity data are provided.

Robinson, John P., Athanasiou, Robert, and Head, Hendra B. *Measures of Occupational Attitudes and Occupational Characteristics.* Ann Arbor: Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, 1969 (HF 5549.5 J63 R62).

This book contains 77 measures and reviews of tests that can be used to define job satisfaction, occupational attitudes and values, leadership styles, and job attitudes.

Robinson, John P., Rusk, Jerrold, G., and Head, Hendra B. *Measures of Political Attitudes.* Ann Arbor: Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, 1968 (JA 74.5 R6).

This book contains 95 measures of attitudes toward politics, liberalism/conservatism, race and ethnic origins, and the political process. Assessments of the form and scope of each test are made.

Robinson, John P. and Shaver, Phillip R. *Measures of Social Psychological Attitudes* (Rev. ed.). Ann Arbor: Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, 1973 (HM 251 R739 1973).

This book contains 106 measures of social-psychological attitudes, including life satisfaction, self-esteem, internal-external locus of control, and alienation and anomia. This book emphasizes measures that are especially useful in survey research rather than in laboratory settings. Reliability information, norms, sample adequacy, and administration and scoring data are provided.

Shaw, Marvin E. and Wright, Jack M. *Scales for the Measurement of Attitudes.* NY: McGraw-Hill, 1967 (BF 378 A75 S45).

This book contains 176 scales that are related to social practices, politics, religion, ethnic and national groups, significant others, and social institutions. Scales are evaluated and presented in full. An extensive bibliography is included.

Simon, A. and Boyer, E.G. *Mirrors for Behavior II: An Anthology of Observation Instruments.* Philadelphia: Research for Better Schools, 1970 (LB 1131.5 S552).

This book contains 79 observational systems drawn from education, group dynamics, psychotherapy, medicine, industry, and anthropology.

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ERIC Digest

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FOSTERING THE POSTSECONDARY ASPIRATIONS OF GIFTED URBAN MINORITY STUDENTS

On a beautiful spring day, as Maria was getting help with a paper she was writing, she said, "I'm going to hate working inside for the rest of my life."

I laughed and said, "It depends on what kind of job you have whether or not you have to work inside."

She looked both puzzled and surprised and then responded, "But I'm going to be a secretary," thus implying that her workdays would be spent indoors.

Stunned, I asked her why on earth she planned to be a secretary. She told me that her mother had always told her that being a secretary was "the very best job."

Why was I stunned that this 15-year-old Mexican-American girl planned to be a secretary? Because she attends a magnet school for gifted adolescents, scores at the 99th percentile on achievement tests, has an IQ that indicates superior intelligence, is highly creative, and has extraordinary writing ability.

Is this situation unique? Or is a discrepancy between actual potential and self-perceived potential common among gifted urban minority youth? Tragically, it appears to be the norm rather than the exception. Throughout their childhood, gifted students from middle- to upper-middle-class homes hear an achievement message, which includes plans for attending a good college or university. Many of these students have parents who attended college or who at least believe that a college education is essential in order to better oneself.

On the other hand, gifted students from lower-socioeconomic-status homes often have a different message communicated to them: Education is not essential to "making it" in the world. Getting and keeping a "job" is the goal, as opposed to choosing and being satisfied with the "career" to which middle-socioeconomic-status students aspire. Going beyond the high school diploma is generally seen as an unnecessary waste of time and money. Long-range goals are not a real part of urban minority families' schema; they tend to focus on the immediate future. The aspiration to achieve by capitalizing on one's intelligence and creativity is rarely fostered by these families. In fact, even if it is stimulated elsewhere, it may be suppressed by family pressure.

Gifted students "do not stop being gifted when they turn eighteen" (Daniel, 1985, p. 235), and just as they have needed differentiated attention focused on their elementary, middle, and high school education, so do they need differentiated attention focused on their postsecondary experience. If changes are to be made in the attitudes of gifted urban minority youth so that they seek the requisite college experiences, changes must be made in the attitudes of those people who have the most influence over their education. Teachers, counselors, principals, parents, and the students themselves must become more attentive to the differential requirements of this population of gifted students. These suggestions for consciousness-raising presented here are based on experience gained while working with gifted urban minority students in a large metropolitan area.

Teachers

For many gifted urban minority students, their teachers are the main, and sometimes only, source of encouragement and information regarding educational opportunities. A teacher's influence is immeasurable: A single teacher can be the catalyst for ensuring that a bright youth expands and develops himself or herself by attending college. In order to be this catalyst, however, the teacher must be aware and take steps toward fostering the notion that the student can have a better chance to succeed if a college education is sought and obtained.

First of all, teachers of gifted urban minority youth need to realize that there is a disparity between their aspirations for these students and the aspirations of the students themselves. Part of it can be attributed to a cultural difference, since the ranks of teachers are predominantly filled with people from middle-class backgrounds. Teachers should be sensitive to differences, but not judgmental, and should not assume that the students' background is deficient.

Second, teachers must realize that, as they begin to encourage these able students to attend college, some defensive attitudes may surface in both students and parents. Marion pointed out that

> A major need of black parents of low socioeconomic gifted and talented children is the maintenance of a normal family-school relationship. This is often the most difficult hurdle for parents and teachers to overcome, for giftedness and talentedness are not the necessary "looked for" virtues in many low-socioeconomic children. (1981, p. 33)

Defensiveness may manifest itself as students belligerently claim that they do not even want to go to college ("Who needs it anyway?") or as they nonchalantly accept material that is offered. Teachers must realize that these behaviors are often indicative that a student is receiving negative messages from home concerning college attendance. Continued gentle persuasion must be offered to such students and their parents.

Close and sensitive contact with parents is one way that teachers can have the desired influence on bright urban minority students' postsecondary aspirations. Telephone contacts, letters about upcoming college introductory events, information about scholarships, and personal conferences are all recommended for establishing and maintaining a rapport that will be conducive to parents' acceptance of a young person's going to college.

Just as frequent contact with parents is necessary to inculcate the idea of college for their children, so too is it necessary for the students to hear the message. It will take more than a few casual references dropped into conversations to instill this idea. Teachers must make a deliberate effort to establish with these students the idea that they should attend college and are capable of doing so.

In addition to talking directly to students about college, teachers can invite others to do so. For example, minority adults who have succeeded in business, education, the arts, or the professions could be invited as guest speakers. These adults can share with the students how they chose the college or university they did, how they financed their college education, how long it took them, what adjustments they had to make in college, and what benefits they have derived from the college experience.

Teachers can also keep a bulletin board on which they and members of the class can post newspaper and magazine articles regarding scholarships, grants, and other opportunities for minority students. Gifted education journals and newsletters (both state and national) carry such announcements, and the teacher or selected students could be responsible for monitoring these journals at the local university or public library.

A final awareness that teachers must have regarding their gifted urban minority students is the anxiety that many of these students feel regarding their post-high-school life. Some are the first in their family to finish high school. This accomplishment alone presents them with choices for which no family member has set a precedent and affords them opportunities for which they have no family role model. Others have already determined that they want further education and are fearful of the battle they anticipate when their parents become aware of these plans. A portion of these students are apprehensive regarding their ability to measure up, intellectually and financially, to the task of college participation. Teachers should make an effort to allay some of these fears and provide strategies that will enable students to accept and deal rationally with them.

Counselors

Because of the void that exists between high school counseling and college advising (Grites, 1979) and because of the additional obstacles and pressures that impinge on gifted urban minority students who attend college, the school counselor's role in preparing gifted urban minority youth for appropriate postsecondary school education cannot be underestimated. According to Dunham and Russo, counselors

> are needed to help direct the career education program for the gifted disadvantaged students. They are also needed for individual counseling to point out educational and career possibilities for each student. The counselor must be aware of the needs and obstacles that create problems for these students. (1983, p. 26)

More than other gifted students, gifted urban minority youth must have strong guidance in this area. In the recent Carnegie Report on teaching as a profession, the statement was made that "good counseling is indispensable for poor and minority youngsters, who often have few others to turn to for advice" (1986, p. 14). Counselors must take an early and active role in implanting the idea of college, lining up college recruiters, and obtaining financial aid for these students.

Impressing gifted urban minority students with the importance of attending college may involve the counselor in designing a career awareness program that iterates the educational preparations necessary for various career fields. Such a program should be an ongoing effort that integrates all that the counselor can determine about student interests, career availability, and community mores.

School counselors traditionally work with college recruiters, but the job becomes more involved when the recruits are gifted students from urban minority backgrounds. Counselors can work to raise the consciousness of recruiters regarding the differing demands of attracting bright urban youth. College recruiters need to realize that, to a greater extent than with other students, the parents must also be convinced—not just to send their child to XYZ college, but to send their child to *any* college.

In working with parents, the question "How much is this going to cost?" naturally arises. For low-socioeconomic-status parents, the cost of college tuition, room and board, books, and travel is a burden they cannot bear. Financial aid must be sought for these students—from the colleges and universities they will attend, from foundations, from the U.S. government, from service clubs and organizations, and from private individuals. Laying the groundwork for this sort of commitment is the most difficult part of the task. Once organizations and individuals have donated money and have seen the enormous positive results of their investment, they will continue to give. But the initial contacts require time and effort.

Even if a student receives a full scholarship, one aspect of college expense that is not covered by financial aid is the cost of "keeping up with the Joneses," that is, the cost of fitting in. The culture shock will be severe enough that the minority urban gifted student's trauma need not be accentuated by feeling completely out of place due to inappropriate clothing and the lack of ability to go out and grab a pizza. Counselors soliciting money for this sort of student support must make a strong case to potential contributors. They may find that successful minority adults who attended expensive, respected colleges or universities under a severe

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GANGS

By Joan Gaustad

Although youth gangs have existed in the cities of the United States almost as long as the nation itself, trends during the last two decades have alarmed school and community officials. Gangs, now more violent than ever, are spreading to new locations. Warns Clarence Terhune, director of the California Youth Authority, "the problem can erupt anywhere at almost any time" (Kay McKinney 1988).

What Is a Gang?

Gangs vary tremendously in composition and activities. Irving Spergel (1989) suggests the following working definition: "juvenile and young adults associating together for serious, especially violent, criminal behavior with special concerns for 'turf'." Turf can signify the control of a physical territory, a criminal enterprise, or both.

Defense of turf can lead to extreme violence. As Captain Raymond Gott of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Office says, simply "wearing the wrong color in a certain neighborhood can get you killed" (McKinney). Turf lines are normally drawn in the neighborhoods, but gang rivalries also have a devastating impact on schools. Often, even nongang members begin bringing weapons to school for "protection" from robberies and gang violence (Cindy Tursman 1989).

Asian, black, Hispanic, white and interracial gangs exist, ranging in size from a few members to thousands. Ages range from preteen to adult, but the average age is dropping—from 15 in 1984, to 13 1/2 in 1987 (McKinney). The vast majority of gang members are male (Spergel).

Most gang members advertise their membership by distinctive dress and behaviors, including handkerchiefs and shoelaces of specific colors, jewelry, tattoos, jargon, and hand gestures. They mark their territory and challenge other gangs with spray-painted graffiti or gang symbols. The National School Safety Center (NSSC 1988) provides an excellent summary of the characteristics of different types of gangs.

Why Do Gangs Form?

According to Larry Rawles, deputy director of Philadelphia's Crisis Intervention Network, gang membership offers kids status, acceptance, and self-esteem they haven't found elsewhere (Del Stover 1986). In poorer communities, a breakdown of family and community structures may leave kids more receptive to gang recruitment. However, gangs can also form in affluent areas among kids who feel alienated from friends and families (Stover).

Financial gain is a powerful motive for gang involvement, especially for impoverished youths with poor education and lack of access to decent jobs (McKinney). The vast sums of money available through the drug trade have increased the size of gangs, both by recruitment and by longer retention of members. Usually only a few adult gang members make large sums of money. Aware that courts treat juveniles far more leniently than adults, they shield themselves by using juvenile gang members as everything from lookouts to gang hitmen (NSSC). Drug trafficking makes traditional turf battles bloodier by providing the money for sophisticated weaponry, and it creates new sources of conflict as rival gangs fight over lucrative drug territories (McKinney).

Where Are Gangs a Problem and How Do They Spread?

Gangs continue to be active in large cities where they have been long established, and they are spreading to suburbs and smaller cities. Pressure by police and rivals and the lure of higher drug profits push gangs to seek new territories (Dan Bryant 1989). Meanwhile, in many midsize communities factory closings and business failures create unemployment and poverty, "conditions conducive to gang activity" (Tursman).

In some cities, like Chicago and Philadelphia, gang activity is actually stabilizing or declining as their gangs move into other cities like Detroit and Milwaukee (Tursman). Gangs flourish in Los Angeles, the current "gang capital of the U.S.," in spite of increased community and police efforts, and have spread like cancer to surrounding communities (Stover). The Drug Enforcement Agency has confirmed the presence of members of Los Angeles gangs in forty-nine other cities across the nation. Chris Baca, director of Albuquerque's Youth Development, Inc., warns other midsize cities to react quickly; by the time Albuquerque acknowledged it had a problem, gangs with Los Angeles origins were firmly established (McKinney).

School officials in Eugene, Oregon, aware of the dramatic increase in gang activity in nearby Portland, recently made a unique attempt to block its spread to their own community. On October 2, 1989, eighteen-year-old Robbie Robinson, accompanied by two friends wearing gang colors, enrolled at South Eugene High School. Administrators contacted Jefferson High School in Portland, Robinson's previous high school, and learned he had an extensive record of gang activity and had been barred from finishing high school there. On Robinson's first day of attendance, a group of seven additional teens dressed in gang fashion entered and walked through the halls. One of them announced that he, too, planned to enroll.

Principal Don Jackson suspended Robinson. A week later, in the first such action in the nation, the school board sought an injuction in Lane County Circuit Court to bar the student permanently from the city's schools, not on the basis of any specific actions, but because "his mere presence at the school in clothing associated with gang membership constitutes a danger to the health and safety of students" (Jeff Wright 1989). On November 8, the injunction was granted.

Some citizens expressed concern about the constitutionality of the ruling, but members of the local chapter of the NAACP and of the Community Coalition for the Prevention of Gangs applauded the action. Said Jackson, "You don't un-gang a community. We may not be able to keep it out, but at least we have to try" (personal interview, May 7, 1990).

How Can School Officials Fight Gang Activity?

Experts agree the schools must be established as neutral ground. Anything related to gang membership should be banned: weapons, violence, illegal activity, gang-identified clothing, insignia, and gestures. Staff can expect to be tested constantly by the subtle and changing forms of gang symbols.

Administrators must communicate clear, consistent standards of discipline and enforce them. In a study of Ohio gang activity, Dr. Ronald Huff found that teachers who backed down in confrontations were more likely to be assaulted than teachers who were fair but firm (Bryant). The NSSC details a number of specific conflict prevention strategies.

Graffiti should be painted over immediately. Not only does this signal that school property is not the gang's, it also discourages rival gangs from responding with more graffiti, or worse, defacing their rival's symbols, which can lead to retaliation and violence.

Anti-gang policies of the Portland school superintendent included searching students and lockers if there were indications of drugs or weapons, and expelling and referring to juvenile court any student found to possess weapons (McKinney).

Some districts split up gangs by transferring disruptive students. This may reduce friction, but Spergel warns new problems sometimes result; a gang member may be picked out if he is transferred to a school dominated by another gang (Stover). Schools may also offer alternative educational programs for gang members (Richard Arthur 1989).

Districts unused to gang activity may be reluctant to acknowledge its appearance. Roberto Rivera, director of the Chicago Intervention Network, urges school boards to encourage administrators to be alert for signs of gang activity and assure them that reporting problems won't reflect adversely on them (Stover).

Preventive efforts are also important. Chicago schools offer recreational alternatives to gang activity by staying open for evening extracurricular activities (Stover). The City of Paramount, California, has developed an anti-gang curriculum entitled "Alternatives to Gang Membership" (Tursman). Experts stress the importance of starting prevention programs in the early elementary grades in order to circumvent gang influence (Bryant). Spergel suggests specifically targeting "youth who give clear indication of gang involvement" as opposed to those identified as generally "at-risk." Some warning signs include evidence of child abuse, behavior and personality changes, gang-identified dress, sudden unexplained wealth, and increased substance abuse (NSSC).

How Can Schools and Communities Jointly Fight Gangs?

Information sharing is vital. Milwaukee School Security chief Jerry Mourning urges schools to keep abreast of gang rivalries: "You need to know what's happening in the community. What happens over the weekend, we handle on Monday mornings" (Stover). In Chicago, the school board receives monthly reports on student assaults from each school to give them an overview of citywide trends (Stover).

Police expertise can benefit schools. In Chicago, police have trained 6,000 teachers to identify gang behaviors. Milwaukee school administrators and police meet periodically to exchange information on gang activities. Police can also train school staff to handle armed or violent youths (Stover).

In many communities, schools have joined law enforcement, judicial, and civil authorities to create coordinated anti-gang programs, such as the Philadelphia Crisis Intervention Network and the Chicago Intervention Network. School boards in Pasadena and Compton, California, have invited the Los Angeles Community Youth Gang Services "to conduct weekly seminars for fourth, fifth, and sixth graders on the dangers of becoming involved with a street gang" (Stover). The NSSC lists a number of successful school and community programs, some preventive in nature.

Sometimes anti-gang efforts go beyond the community. In 1985, Illinois passed legislation increasing penalties for distribution or sale of weapons and drugs within 1,000 feet of school property. New Jersey recently established similar safe-school zones (Tursman). Even comprehensive efforts may be unable to eliminate gangs. But school officials can take steps to control gang activity within their sphere, and they can make valuable contributions to reducing the problem in their communities.

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ERIC Clearinghouse on Tests, Measurement, and Evaluation **Digest EDO-TM-89-6 October 1989**

The GED Testing Program

Linda Russell, GED Testing Service
American Council on Education

Passing the Tests of General Educational Development (GED Tests) and earning a high school equivalency diploma enables people who did not finish high school to qualify for more jobs and opportunities. In 1988, nearly 740,000 people throughout the United States, the U.S. territories, and in ten Canadian provinces and territories took the GED Tests. About 72 percent passed the tests and qualified for a GED diploma. More than 10 million persons have earned GED diplomas since 1971.

Many adult education programs, schools, libraries, state governments, and local governments work closely with the American Council on Education, the sponsor of the GED, to help people who do not have a high school diploma. This digest provides answers to some of the questions most often asked about the program.

Who Can Take the GED Tests?

Adults who are not in high school or who left school without graduating can take the GED Tests, as long as they meet other eligibility requirements set by their state department of education. Many states, for example, have minimum age and residency requirements.

How Useful Is a GED Diploma or Credential?

GED graduates can qualify to attend college, enter training programs, and get better jobs. The GED diploma, like a high school diploma, is no guarantee you will get a specific job or into a specific college. However, many colleges and employers demand at least a high school diploma or its equivalent. In the U.S., a recent survey showed that 92 percent of all colleges accept GED graduates and 96 percent of all employers accept the GED as the equivalent of a high school diploma.

What do I have to know to pass?

There are five parts to the GED Tests. They are: Writing Skills, Social Studies, Science, Interpreting Literature and the Arts, and Mathematics. The test questions require general knowledge and thinking skills. All the test questions are multiple choice, except Part II of the Writing Skills Test, for which you must write an essay. The tests are available in

English, Spanish, and French and in large print, audio, and Braille.

How can I prepare for the GED Tests?

No formal preparation is required, but many people attend adult education classes before taking the GED Tests. Classes are offered by local school districts, colleges, and community service agencies and are usually free. Teachers in these programs can help you decide what areas you need to study to prepare for the tests. Books and other study materials are also widely available at book stores and libraries. A GED preparation program is carried by many cable and public television stations.

What is a Passing Score?

Each state and province sets its own passing scores. All are at or above a minimum set by ACE. Graduating high school seniors are used to decide passing scores on the GED Tests; the test questions are "tried out" on a nationally representative sample of seniors. To earn a GED diploma, you must earn a higher score than did at least 30 percent of the high school seniors in the sample. Scores ranging from 20 to 80 are used to report GED Test results; a score of 50 is the median for U.S. seniors. Most states require an average score of at least 45--a level at which 30 percent of the graduating seniors would fail.

When and Where Are the GED Tests Given?

The GED Tests are given at over 3,400 testing locations in the U.S., Canada, and overseas. To find out about testing locations and times in your area, call your local adult education program or state department of education. Some states have walk-in testing; in others you must apply in advance.

How Much Does it Cost to Take the GED Tests?

In most places, there is a small fee for testing, and sometimes there is an additional charge for issuing a credential or diploma. In four states and one U.S. territory, the tests are given free of charge. Testing fees in the U.S. range from $10.00 to about $35.00; in Canada, they average about $40.00. In some states and provinces, there is an additional charge for retesting.

Can I take it again if I fail?

Yes. In some states and provinces, there is a waiting period and a requirement that you attend a preparation program before retesting. However, these are usually minimal requirements. If you take the test more than once, your highest scores are counted.

Where Can I Get More Information?

For information about adult education classes and test schedules call your local adult education program, high school, community college, or public library.

For information about GED Testing Service research, test development, and publications, write or call:

GED Testing Service
One Dupont Circle NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 939-9490

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ERIC Digest

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EC–90

GIFTEDNESS AND THE GIFTED: WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

What Does Giftedness Mean?

Many parents say, "I know what giftedness is, but I can't put it into words." This generally is followed by reference to a particular child who seems to manifest gifted behaviors. Unfortunately, there are many misconceptions of the term, all of which become deterrents to understanding and catering to the needs of children identified as gifted. Let's study the following statement:

> Giftedness is that precious endowment of potentially outstanding abilities which allows a person to interact with the environment with remarkably high levels of achievement and creativity.

This statement is the product of a small neighborhood group of parents who took a comprehensive view of the concept of giftedness before focusing on any attempt to define the gifted child. They thought, first, that within giftedness is a quality of innateness (or, as they said, "a gift conferred by nature"), and second, that one's environment is the arena in which the gifts come into play and develop. Therefore, they reasoned that the "remarkably high levels of achievement and creativity" result from a continuous and functional interaction between a person's inherent and acquired abilities and characteristics.

We often hear statements such as "She's a born artist," or "He's a natural athlete," or conversely, "Success never came easy for me; I had to learn the hard way," or "He's a self-made man." Those who manifest giftedness obviously have some inherent or inborn factors plus the motivation and stamina to learn from and cope with the rigors of living.

We suggest that you wrestle with the term in your own way, looking at giftedness as a concept that demands the investment of time, money, and energy. This will help you discuss giftedness more meaningfully with other parents, school administrators, school board members, or anyone who needs to understand the dynamics of the term.

Who Are Gifted Children?

Former U.S. Commissioner of Education Sidney P. Marland, Jr., in his August 1971 report to Congress, stated, "Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society."

The same report continued:

> Children capable of high performance include those with demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability in any of the following areas, singly or in combination:
>
> 1. general intellectual ability
> 2. specific academic aptitude
> 3. creative or productive thinking
> 4. leadership ability
> 5. visual or performing arts
> 6. psychomotor ability

Using a broad definition of giftedness, a school system could expect to identify 10% to 15% or more of its student population as gifted and talented. A brief description of each area of giftedness or talent as defined by the Office of Gifted and Talented will help you understand this definition.

General intellectual ability or talent. Laypersons and educators alike usually define this in terms of a high intelligence test score—usually two standard deviations above the mean—on individual or group measures. Parents and teachers often recognize students with general intellectual talent by their wide-ranging fund of general information and high levels of vocabulary, memory, abstract word knowledge, and abstract reasoning.

Specific academic aptitude or talent. Students with specific academic aptitudes are identified by their outstanding performance on an achievement or aptitude test in one area such as mathematics or language arts. The organizers of talent searches sponsored by a number of universities and colleges identify students with specific academic aptitude who score at the 97th percentile or higher on standard achievement tests and then give these students the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Remarkably large numbers of students score at these high levels.

Creative and productive thinking. This is the ability to produce new ideas by bringing together elements usually thought of as independent or dissimilar—the aptitude for developing new meanings that have social value. Characteristics of creative and productive students include openness to experience, setting personal standards for evaluation, ability to play with ideas, willingness to take risks, preference for complexity, tolerance for ambiguity, positive self-image, and the ability to become submerged in a task. Creative and productive students are identified through the use of tests such as the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking or through demonstrated creative performance.

Leadership ability. Leadership can be defined as the ability to direct individuals or groups to a common decision or action. Students who demonstrate giftedness in leadership ability use group skills and negotiate in difficult situations. Many teachers recognize leadership through a student's keen interest and skill in problem solving. Leadership characteristics include self-confidence, responsibility, cooperation, a tendency to dominate, and the ability to adapt readily to new situations. These students can be identified through instruments such as the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation Behavior (FIRO-B).

Visual and performing arts. Gifted students with talent in the arts demonstrate special talents in visual art, music, dance, drama, or other related studies. These students can be identified by using task descriptions such as the Creative Products Scales, which were developed for the Detroit Public Schools by Patrick Byrons and Beverly Ness Parke of Wayne State University.

Psychomotor ability. This involves kinesthetic motor abilities such as practical, spatial, mechanical, and physical skills. It is seldom used as a criterion in gifted programs.

Other Viewpoints

Robert Sternberg and Robert Wagner (1982) have suggested that giftedness is a kind of mental self-management. The mental management of one's life in a constructive, purposeful way has three basic elements: adapting to environments, selecting new environments, and shaping environments. According to Sternberg and Wagner, the key psychological basis of intellectual giftedness resides in insight skills that include three main processes: (1) separating relevant from irrelevant information, (2) combining isolated pieces of information into a unified whole, and (3) relating newly acquired information to information acquired in the past.

Sternberg and Wagner emphasized problem-solving abilities and viewed the gifted student as one who processes information rapidly and uses insight abilities. Howard Gardner (1983) also suggested a concept of multiple intelligences, stating that there are several ways of viewing the world: linguistic, logical/mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligence.

Joseph Renzulli (1986) stated that gifted behavior reflects an interaction among three basic clusters of human traits: above-average general and/or specific abilities, high levels of task commitment (motivation), and high levels of creativity. According to Renzulli, gifted and talented children are those who possess or are capable of developing this composite of traits and applying them to any potentially valuable area of human performance.

A good source for pursuing the characteristics of giftedness in depth is Barbara Clark's informative book, *Growing Up Gifted* (1988), which presents an exhaustive list of characteristics under five major headings: Cognitive (thinking), Affective (feeling), Physical, Intuitive, and Societal.

No one child manifests all of the attributes described by researchers and the Office of Gifted and Talented. Nevertheless, it is important for parents to be fully aware of the ways in which giftedness can be recognized. Often, certain behaviors such as constantly having unique solutions to problems, asking endless, probing questions, or even the masterful manipulation of others are regarded by parents as unnatural, unlike other children, and trying to parental patience. Therefore, our recommendation is to study the characteristics of gifted children with an open mind. Do not use the list as a scorecard; simply discuss and appreciate the characteristics and let common sense, coupled with love, take over.

Some General Characteristics

(These are typical factors stressed by educational authorities as being indicative of giftedness. Obviously, no child is outstanding in all characteristics.)

1. Shows superior reasoning powers and marked ability to handle ideas; can generalize readily from specific facts and can see subtle relationships; has outstanding problem-solving ability.

2. Shows persistent intellectual curiosity; asks searching questions; shows exceptional interest in the nature of man and the universe.
3. Has a wide range of interests, often of an intellectual kind; develops one or more interests to considerable depth.
4. Is markedly superior in quality and quantity of written and/or spoken vocabulary; is interested in the subtleties of words and their uses.
5. Reads avidly and absorbs books well beyond his or her years.
6. Learns quickly and easily and retains what is learned; recalls important details, concepts and principles; comprehends readily.
7. Shows insight into arithmetical problems that require careful reasoning and grasps mathematical concepts readily.
8. Shows creative ability or imaginative expression in such things as music, art, dance, drama; shows sensitivity and finesse in rhythm, movement, and bodily control.
9. Sustains concentration for lengthy periods and shows outstanding responsibility and independence in classroom work.
10. Sets realistically high standards for self; is self-critical in evaluating and correcting his or her own efforts.
11. Shows initiative and originality in intellectual work; shows flexibility in thinking and considers problems from a number of viewpoints.
12. Observes keenly and is responsive to new ideas.
13. Shows social poise and an ability to communicate with adults in a mature way.
14. Gets excitement and pleasure from intellectual challenge; shows an alert and subtle sense of humor.

A Quick Look at Intelligence

The attempts to define giftedness refer in one way or another to so-called "inborn" attributes, which, for lack of a better term, are called *intelligence*. Significant efforts have been made to measure intelligence, but, because the concept is elusive, test constructors simply aim at testing what they feel are typical manifestations of intelligence in behaviors. Perhaps a little rhyme used for years by kindergarten teachers will help to describe this elusiveness:

> *Nobody sees the wind; neither you, nor I. But when the trees bow down their heads, the wind is passing by.*

Just as we cannot actually see the wind, we cannot find, operate on, or transplant intelligence. Yet we see the working or manifestations of intelligence in the behaviors of people.

The man-made computation of an intelligence quotient, or IQ, is probably the best general indicator of intelligence, but in no way is it infallible. All too often, a child's IQ is misunderstood and becomes a lifelong "handle." However, given our present knowledge, the results of a standardized intelligence test administered by a competent examiner provide as reliable an indication as possible of a person's potential ability to learn and cope. Until some scientific breakthrough is developed, we will rely on the IQ score to approximate how mentally gifted a person may be.

The nature of intelligence was once explained in this way:

> If intelligence were something you could see, touch, and weigh, it would be something like a can of paint. The genius would have a gallon, the person who has severe retardation, only half a pint. The rest of us would have varying amounts between these extremes, with the majority possessing about two quarts. This is clear enough, but it is only half the story.
>
> Each can of paint contains the same five or six ingredients in varying amounts. One can may be "long" on oil, another on pigment, a third on turpentine, the fourth on gloss or drying agent. So, although two cans contain the same amount of paint, the paint may be of vastly different consistency, color, or character.

Good painters want to know the elements in the paint with which they are working. Parents and teachers want to know the kinds of intelligence with which they are working. What are the special qualities of this intelligence? In what proportions are these elements present? Most important, how can these elements be used?

We recommend that you do not become bogged down in probing into the concept of intelligence. Its intricacies and mysteries are fascinating, but it must not become a convenient synonym for giftedness. An excellent coverage of the concept of intelligence is provided by Barbara Clark in *Growing Up Gifted*.

The exciting advances in research on brain functioning, coupled with the realization that a child's intelligence is only one key to understanding giftedness, have underscored the importance of studying *all* characteristics of the gifted child.

The Gifted Child Is Called Many Things

Often parents are confused by the many terms used in referring to the gifted child. Many parents hear these terms used—sometimes adopting them in their own conversations—without knowing whether they are synonymous with "gifted" or are just words that help to explain the concept.

The term *genius* used to be widely employed but now it is reserved for reference only to the phenomenally gifted person. *Talented* tends to be used when referring to a particular strength or ability of a person. Thought should be given to whether the talent is truly a gift or is, rather, an ability that has become a highly developed skill through practice. It is safe to say that generally the person identified as gifted is one who has multiple talents of a high order.

The terms *prodigy* and *precocious* are most commonly used when a child evidences a decidedly advanced degree of skill in a particular endeavor at a very early age, as well as a very disciplined type of motivation. It is interesting to note that the derivation of the words *precocious* or *precocity* comes from the ancient Greek word for "precooked" and connotes the idea of early ripening.

Superior is a comparative term. When a child is classified as "superior," we would like to know to whom, or what group, he or she is superior, and to what degree. A child may be markedly superior to the majority of children in a specific mental ability such as verbal comprehension and at the same time be equally inferior in spatial relations or memory. The looseness of the term limits its usage in most cases to broad generalization. A *high IQ* may be anything, depending on what it is higher than.

Rapid learner is a helpful term in understanding giftedness, because it is a distinct characteristic manifested by the identified gifted child.

The term *exceptional* is appropriate when referring to the gifted child as being different in the characteristics listed earlier.

At this point it is important to bring into focus a term that continues to be tossed around altogether too loosely in reference to education of the gifted. That term is *elitism*.

By derivation, *elite* means the choice, or best, or superior part of a body or class of persons. However, time and an overemphasis on egalitarianism have imparted a negative connotation to the word, implying snobbishness, selectivity, and unfair special attention.

But in fact, gifted children are elite in the same way that anyone becomes a champion, a recordholder, a soloist, an inventor, or a leader in important realms of human endeavor. Therefore, their parents have a distinct responsibility to challenge those who cry "elitism" and explain to them the true meaning of the term.

The only reason for mentioning these terms—and there are many more—is to caution parents that semantics and language usage can be tricky and confusing. Thus, *your* personal understanding and application of the term *gifted* becomes doubly important.

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A Glossary of Measurement Terms

A

achievement test -- an objective examination that measures educationally relevant skills or knowledge about such subjects as reading, spelling, or mathematics.

age norms -- values representing typical or average performance of people of age groups.

average -- a statistic that indicates the central tendency or most typical score of a group of scores. Most often average refers to the sum of a set of scores divided by the number of scores in the set.

B

battery -- a group of carefully selected tests that are administered to a given population, the results of which are of value individually, in combination, and totally.

C

ceiling -- the upper limit of ability that can be measured by a particular test.

criterion-referenced test -- a measurement of achievement of specific criteria or skills in terms of absolute levels of mastery. The focus is on performance of an individual as measured against a standard or criteria rather than against performance of others who take the same test, as with norm-referenced tests.

D

diagnostic test -- an intensive, in-depth evaluation process with a relatively detailed and narrow coverage of a specific area. The purpose of this test is to determine the specific learning needs of individual students and to be able to meet those needs through regular or remedial classroom instruction.

domain-referenced test -- a test in which performance is measured against a well-defined set of tasks or body of knowledge (domain). Domain-referenced tests are a specific set of criterion-referenced tests and have a similar purpose.

G

grade equivalent -- the estimated grade level that corresponds to a given score.

I

informal test -- a nonstandardized test that is designed to give an approximate index of an individual's level of ability or learning style; often teacher-constructed.

inventory -- a catalog or list for assessing the absence or presence of certain attitudes, interests, behaviors, or other items regarded as relevant to a given purpose.

item -- an individual question or exercise in a test or evaluative instrument.

N

norm -- performance standards that is established by a reference group and that describes average or typical performance. Usually norms are determined by testing a representative group and then calculating the group's test performance.

normal curve equivalent -- standard scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of approximately 21.

norm-referenced test -- an objective test that is standardized on a group of individuals whose performance is evaluated in relation to the performance of others; contrasted with criterion-referenced test.

O

objective percent correct -- the percent of the items measuring a single objective that a student answers correctly.

P

percentile -- the percent of people in the norming sample whose scores were below a given score.

percent score -- the percent of items that are answered correctly.

performance test -- designed to evaluate general intelligence or aptitudes. Consists primarily of motor items or perceptual items because verbal abilities play a minimal role.

published test -- a test that is publicly available because it has been copyrighted and published commercially.

R

rating scales -- subjective assessments made on predetermined criteria in the form of a scale. Rating scales include numerical scales or descriptive scales. Forced choice rating scales require that the rater determine whether an individual demonstrates more of one trait than another.

raw score -- the number of items that are answered correctly.

reliability -- the extent of which a test is dependable, stable, and consistent when administered to the same individuals on different occasions. Technically, this is a statistical term that defines the extent of which errors of measurement are absent from a measurement instrument.

S

screening -- a fast, efficient measurement for a large population to identify individuals who may deviate in a specified area, such as the incidence of maladjustment or readiness for academic work.

specimen set -- a sample set of testing materials that are available from a commercial test publisher. May include a complete individual test without multiple copies or a copy of the basic test and administration procedures.

standardized test -- a form of measurement that has been normed against a specific population. Standardization is obtained by administering the test to a given population and then calculating means, standard deviations, standardized scores, and percentiles. Equivalent scores are then produced for comparisons of an individual score to the norm group's performance.

standard scores -- a score that is expressed as a deviation from a population mean.

stanine -- one of the steps in a nine-point scale of standard scores.

V

validity -- the extent to which a test measures what it was intended to measure. Validity indicates the degree of accuracy of either predictions or inferences based upon a test score.

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GRADE RETENTION: MAKING THE DECISION

According to a recent poll, 70 percent of all public school parents believe that policies for promotion from grade to grade should be stricter (Gallup, 1986). Parents may have become concerned about "low standards" because of publicity about our poor national school achievement. They also may be influenced by the current belief that "social promotions"—promoting a child solely on the basis of chronological age—are not the solution to high retention rates.

Many educators today propose minimum competency tests as a spur to raise achievement for all students. Yet failure rates on these tests are high in most urban schools, and, inadvertently, they may even be resulting in increased grade retention (Walker & Madhere, 1987).

Despite the increasing popularity of competency tests, retention policies still differ from school to school. Although systematic retention data are scarce, overall retention in elementary schools across the country ranges from 12 to 15 percent (Bucko, 1986). In New York City, which is not unique among large cities in this regard, a third of all general education students are above age for their grades, and in the ninth to twelfth grades over half are above the standard age (New York City Board of Education, 1986).

Contrary to some common sense psychology, the threat of repetition does not appear to motivate students to do better. Further, repeating a year's curriculum does not raise a student's achievement either in the short- or long-run (Walker & Madhere, 1987). Often students learn less during the second year in a given grade. When they do show initial advances during the retention year, they slide back thereafter (Overman, 1986). Moreover, there are negative effects from repeating; stigma, low self-esteem, a lack of interest in extracurricular activities, and waning motivation are the most frequently cited (Bowen & Lipkowitz, 1985).

Evidence is also growing that students retained in the elementary grades tend to be those who drop out later on (Schultz, et al. 1986). Although retention may not cause dropping out, there is a strong connection. A Cincinnati Public School analysis of the system's dropout data, for example, found that students with one retention had a 40-50 percent chance of dropping out of school, those with two retentions had a 60-70 percent chance, and those with three retentions rarely graduated (OERI Urban Superintendents Network, 1987).

Although many educators have kept track of the research and are rightfully skeptical about the educational value of retention, they believe that there are few viable alternatives, and thus commonly continue to offer retention plans. They argue that, even if retention does not improve learning, it enforces the value of a diploma. However, as Holmes and Mathews (1984, p. 233) point out in a comprehensive research review, because the research evidence so consistently shows that the negative effects outweigh the positive outcomes for individual students, "the burden of proof legitimately falls on proponents of retention plans to show there is compelling logic indicating success of their plans when so many other plans have failed."

Characteristics of Retainees

As with suspensions and other academic/punitive measures, poor blacks and Hispanics tend to be retained disproportionate to their numbers. Because minorities are most likely to be seen as low achieving and/or troublesome students, they have retention rates three to four times higher than those of white students (Jackson, 1975). Among blacks, males are particularly at-risk (Gary, 1987). In court hearings claiming prejudice in the dispensation of retentions, the courts have generally upheld the decisions as academically-based. However, in several cases where a disproportionate number of blacks failed to perform satisfactorily on standardized tests, particularly if the school system was previously segregated, the courts have asked school systems to justify their retention/promotion policy (Stroup & Zirkel, 1983).

The Usefulness of Retention

Some young children do benefit from retention, particularly if it is accompanied by new instruction. Retention has been found successful—and less likely to have negative side effects—when used with immature, elementary school students, especially first or second graders, who are not opposed to being retained, whose teacher has confidence in the retention decision, and whose parents accept the decision and can work with the child at home. The crucial variable here appears to be the chance a child is given for additional instruction and further maturation (Bucko, 1986; Walker & Madhere, 1987). On the other hand, children with very low intelligence and achievement, or poor emotional development, may do better in a special education program (Walker & Madhere, 1987). When parents do not support the retention, the child rarely gains by it. And retention above the sixth grade has little benefit for any student. In fact, the higher the elementary grade level, the more likely that a student will do better in an alternative program (Overman, 1986).

Useful Variables to Consider in Determining Retention

Retention on the basis of any single test is inappropriate and unfair. Any method of determining whether or not a student should be promoted must be based on many variables, both academic and social. Two models, one by Light (1981) and another by Lieberman (1980) can usefully guide administrators' retention decisions. The student variables common to both models include:

- Chronological age: the younger, the better.
- Present grade: the lower, the more likely the success.
- Knowledge of English: teaching English to limited English speaking students is more effective than retention.
- Previous retentions: one unsuccessful retention suggests subsequent retentions will not be effective either.

- Age/grade difference between siblings: retention is less effective if the retainee is placed in the same grade as a younger sibling.
- Estimate of intelligence: students of average intelligence are better retention candidates than either very bright students or those below peer average.
- History of learning disabilities: indicates poor prognosis for successful retentions.
- Attitude toward retention: students retained willingly are better candidates than those who oppose retention.

Effective Curricula for Students Who Have Failed

Recycling a child through the same or a similar curriculum, with the same teacher, has no value. The curriculum following the failure of a whole grade or courses in it must be given serious attention. A student who fails can be offered:

- promotion with remedial instruction in unmastered skills.
- transitional classes with other failed or at-risk students.
- retention with remediation.
- partial promotion and summer school.
- special education.

Being placed among regular students is often better for the low achiever because it eliminates the discouragement and labeling that occur in special classes for retainees. On the other hand, students can make real achievement gains in special classes directed at specific skills areas. Given the emotional liabilities of isolation from the mainstream, schools should be particularly certain that the instruction in the alternative class is directed to the skills needs of the students (Walker & Madhere, 1987). Unfortunately, until now, most schools have been unwilling to expend needed resources on those students who are already "failures."

Conclusion

Responsible decisions about whether to promote a student must be made on a variety of both academic and social grounds. Decisions cannot be a matter of either social promotion or narrowly defined academic merit. The numerous alternatives to retention should be carefully considered, and when retention is chosen—preferably as a last resort—the curriculum should be restructured and enriched in ways to meet the needs of the student. Whichever programs a school creates, it must acknowledge that when a high proportion of any classroom or school fails, not only the children are responsible. Schools and communities need to be responsible for finding the necessary resources to turn their substantial retained population into successful students.

—Carol Ascher

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Guidance—The Heart of Education: Three Exemplary Approaches

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Introduction

During the 1980s, when *A Nation At Risk* (1983) set the tone for public discourse on education and when politicians throughout the country were clamoring for educational reform, school districts came under great pressure to raise academic standards, lengthen the school day, implement state-mandated basic curricula, and otherwise become more accountable to taxpayers. But by and large, the advocates of "educational excellence" at that time paid virtually no attention to addressing the urgent personal or emotional needs of our students.

Fortunately, a new school of thought is emerging among educators and counselors. Unlike the reform movement of the past decade, this new movement takes full account of students' personal needs in formulating educational goals. Proponents of this school of thought recognize the close relationship between students' academic development and their personal growth; accordingly, they are seeking to place guidance at the heart of the educational process. The three exemplary guidance programs presented here represent three different, but compatible approaches to this goal.

Norm Gysbers' **Comprehensive Guidance Program Model,** and Robert Myrick's **Teacher Advisor Program** are both based on the idea that guidance is an integral part of a school's educational mission rather than an "ancillary" service peripheral to the curriculum. This idea in turn presupposes an enlightened humanistic conception of education, which recognizes and validates the intrinsic dignity of every student, and which attends empathetically to students' personal and developmental needs. This conception forms the basis of William Purkey's **Invitational Learning Model,** a new paradigm for schooling that seeks to reconstitute the entire school setting—people, places, policies, programs, and processes—so that every aspect of the school serves to "invite" students to learn by respecting them, encouraging them, and validating their unique importance and possibilities.

The Comprehensive Guidance Program Model

Since 1971, Norman C. Gysbers and his associates at the University of Missouri-Columbia have been developing, field-testing, refining, and implementing the **Comprehensive Guidance Program Model,** an innovative, program-based organizational plan that has been adopted by school districts throughout the nation. The foundation for the Model—the theoretical basis for identifying the guidance, knowledge, skills, and attitudes (competencies) that students need is called **Life Career Development,** defined as self-development over a person's life span through the integration of roles, settings, and events in a person's life. Accordingly, this Model emphasizes three domains of human growth and development:

- **Self-knowledge and interpersonal skills.** Helping students to develop awareness and acceptance of themselves and others, and to develop personal standards and a sense of purpose in life.
- **Life roles, settings, and events.** Emphasizing knowledge and understanding of the interrelatedness of various life roles.
- **Life career planning.** Appraising personal values as they relate to prospective life career plans and decisions.

The **Comprehensive Guidance Program Model** consists of three structural foundations and four interactive program components. The structural foundations—definition, rationale, and assumptions—emphasize the centrality of guidance to the total education program, and define the relationship between guidance and other aspects of the curriculum. The four program components delineate the major activities, and the roles and responsibilities of personnel involved in the guidance program:

- **Guidance curriculum,** or structured classroom activities, organized around the three domains of student competencies;
- **Individual planning,** including activities designed to assist students in monitoring and understanding their own growth and development;
- **Responsive services,** such as information seeking, crisis counseling, and teacher/parent/specialist consultation.
- **System support,** activities geared toward program management and operations;

One principal rationale behind the **Comprehensive Guidance Program Model** is to enable counselors to regain control of their time on the job by allocating 100 percent of their time to the four program components discussed above—guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. The **Comprehensive Guidance Program Model** is oriented above all toward student development; it is a programmatic framework which allows counselors to devote their primary attention to guidance activities and structured group experiences for all students.

The Teacher Advisor Program

The assumption behind Robert D. Myrick's **Teacher Advisor Program (TAP)** is that each student needs a friendly adult in the school who knows and cares about him or her in a personal way. The advisors help their advisees deal with the problems of growing up and getting the most out of school. A teacher-advisor is usually responsible for an advisee's cumulative folder, work folders, teacher-student conferences, parent conferences, group guidance experiences and follow-up on academic progress reports. Advisors also consult with other teachers, school counselors, and support personnel about their advisees.

TAP is designed to provide an opportunity for all the students in a school to participate in a small and cohesive group of 15 to 25 peers led by a sensitive and caring teacher who promotes and monitors individual students' educational and developmental experiences as they progress through school. Teacher-advisors meet with their advisees on a regular basis through a "homeroom" or "homebase" group. This becomes, in effect, the students' home within the school, where they have a supportive teacher and group of peers with whom they can explore personal interests, goals, and concerns.

The guidance curriculum varies from one school to another, but it generally addresses personal, social, and academic concerns. Some of the personal and social skills addressed include getting acquainted, self-esteem, and time management. Academic topics might include policies and procedures from the school handbook and computing grade point averages. Career and educational planning topics include career exploration and choices, employability skills and the job market.

Since many high school teachers have never had a guidance course and many are unsure of how to lead a group discussion with adolescents, teachers may need special preparation in how to work with their students and how to build guidance units for their groups. Counselors can therefore assist teachers in developing guidance units, or they can work together as a team in developing and delivering a guidance curriculum, with counselors taking over homebase groups on occasion. It is important, therefore, to establish a cooperative and supportive relationship between teachers and counselors so that they can define their respective roles and differentiate responsibilities.

To enlist the support of a school's faculty for TAP and developmental guidance, it is essential that all teachers understand the philosophy of TAP and commit adequate time to it. Counselors should therefore provide a developmental guidance curriculum guide to establish guidance objectives and provide activities, but allow teachers to choose or discard suggested activities according to their needs. Since most teachers need more training in how to help students solve personal problems or get them working cooperatively in small groups, counselors also may need to assist teachers in developing guidance and interpersonal skills. Administrative support and periodic evaluation are also essential.

Invitational Learning for Counseling and Development

The **Invitational Learning** concept, developed by William W. Purkey, offers a blueprint of what counselors, teachers, principals, supervisors, superintendents, and others can do to enrich the physical and psychological environments of institutions and encourage the development of the people who live and work there.

Invitational Learning is based on four value-based assumptions regarding the nature of people and their potential and the nature of professional helping:

- *Respect:* People are able, valuable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly;
- *Trust:* Education should be a collaborative, cooperative activity where process is as important as product;
- *Optimism:* People possess untapped potential in all areas of human endeavor; and
- *Intentionality:* Human potential can best be realized by places, policies, programs, and processes that are specifically designed to invite development, and by people who are intentionally inviting with themselves and others, personally and professionally.

In a school or any other organization, everything is connected to everything else. And so, in applying **Invitational Learning,** everything counts in creating an environment that invites individuals to reach their potential:

- **Places.** Creating an attractive and inviting physical setting is the easiest way to begin the process of incorporating the **Invitational Learning** concept into a school or other organization.
- **Policies.** Professional counselors can assist schools in developing policies that encourage student responsibility and participation rather than those that create pervasive anxiety, mistrust, and mindless conformity.
- **Programs.** Programs that incorporate the assumptions of **Invitational Learning** include incentive programs such as peer counseling for dropout prevention, faculty mentoring, and other collaborative programs where students, teachers, and counselors all gain by helping and encouraging one another.
- **Processes.** How we teach or counsel and how we act while doing these things are far more important in the long run than what students or clients learn. Educators and counselors in successful schools establish behavioral norms of collegiality, professional development, mutual assistance, and ongoing discussion of instruction and curricular improvements among themselves, and they cultivate attitudes of respect for all students and attention to their needs in all of their interactions.
- **People.** The daily interaction between teachers and students, counselors and clients, and professionals amongst themselves, ultimately determines the success or failure of **Invitational Learning.** Counselors and teachers who wish to employ **Invitational Learning** therefore need a sound knowledge of human development.

The goal of **Invitational Learning** is thus to provide an optimally inviting total environment, both for professional helpers themselves and for those with whom they work. In this respect, it is fully compatible with both the **Comprehensive Guidance Program Model** and the **Teacher Advisor Program.** All three approaches affirm the centrality of developmental guidance to the educational process, and all are predicated on mutual respect and human dignity—for counselors, teachers, and students alike.

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ERIC Digest

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Guidelines for Family Television Viewing

Children in the U.S. view an average of 3-5 hours of television daily. It is difficult to document effects of such extensive television exposure on children. However, research indicates that television viewing may be linked to violent or aggressive behavior, obesity, poor academic performance, precocious sexuality, and the use of drugs or alcohol. Thus, it is important that parents help their children use television as a positive, creative force, and help them avoid television's negative influences.

Aspects of Viewing

1. *Time spent watching television.* When children spend 3-5 hours a day watching television, time for other activities is severely limited. Childhood is a period of growth and development, when children need to play, alone and with other children. Children need to read and talk with other children and adults.

2. *Violence on television.* The amount of violence on television is increasing. A recent report from the National Institute of Mental Health indicates that television violence can be harmful to young children. Children can become frightened, worried or suspicious from watching violence on TV. Researchers have also found that children who watch many violent programs tend to be more aggressive than other children on the playground and in class. Parents should realize that viewing violent programs may encourage their children's tendency toward aggression. Parents also need to keep in mind that television often portrays sexual behavior and the use of alcohol or drugs in realistic or inviting terms.

3. *TV and learning.* Many recent studies indicate that excessive television viewing may have a detrimental effect on learning and school performance. The hours spent viewing television interfere with homework and limit the time available for other ways of learning. If a child is not performing well academically, television watching may be a strong factor contributing to the problem.

4. *Commercials.* The average child sees more than 20,000 commercials a year. Advertisers spend roughly $700 million annually to make sure that their sales pitches reach large numbers of children. The majority of food advertising is for heavily sugared products such as candy and presweetened cereal. Commercials for meat, milk products, bread, and juice make up only about 4% of the food ads shown during children's viewing time. This emphasis can give children a distorted picture of how they ought to eat. A recent study found a direct relationship between amount of television viewing and children's risk of obesity.

Guidelines for Parents

Here are some ideas that will help parents guide their children's TV viewing:

1. *Set limits.* Know how many hours of television your children watch. Limit your children's viewing to one or two hours per day. Don't be afraid to reduce the amount of television your children watch. Your children probably won't like being kept away from the television set. Television is seductive. The programs your children watch are apt to be filled with commercials promoting other programs. The word-of-mouth campaign that goes on in playgrounds and school cafeterias is powerful and pervasive. But establishing good habits for your children is worth the effort. Television watching is often more habit than choice.

Don't be surprised if your children go through a sort of withdrawal when the television time is reduced. You can ease the transition by encouraging alternative activities such as sports, games, chores, reading, conversation, or hobbies. You can help by joining your children in these activities. Because children model their behavior after their parents' example, an examination of your own television viewing habits may also help. Be a good model yourself.

Eliminate some TV watching by setting a few basic rules, such as no television during meals, or before household tasks or homework are completed.

2. *Plan.* Encourage children to plan their viewing by using a *TV Guide* or newspaper listing rather than flipping the channels to decide what to watch. The set should go on only for specific programs, and it should go off when they are over. Approach a television program as you would a movie. Help children decide which show to see, and talk about the show after it ends. Select programs that feature children in your child's age range. Try to balance action, comedy, fine arts, and sports.

Don't reward or withhold television in order to punish. Such practices make television seem even more important.

3. *Participate.* Know what your children watch on television. Watch with them and talk about the programs. TV programs may help you discuss difficult topics such as sex and war. Follow up interesting programs with library books. Explain situations that are confusing. Ask the child about his or her responses to the program when it is over. Discuss the difference between fantasy and reality. The worst program may be a good experience for your children if you are there to help them get the right message, while the best program may be wasted without your encouragement to think, evaluate, and question.

Parents who watch television with their children will be able to point out that violence on television is not real, and that the actor has not actually been killed or maimed. Parents can also show disapproval of the violent episodes and stress that such behavior is not the best way to resolve a problem. By discussing the violence shown on television, parents can lessen its impact.

The best solution, of course, is for parents to eliminate the most violent programs from their children's schedule. Remember that lock-out devices will ensure that certain channels cannot be seen. If you are offended by certain programs and intend to forbid your children to watch them, try to communicate your reasons. If your children are watching a program, and you see behavior to which you object, tell them so, and explain your objection.

The Center for Early Education and Development's publication *How Can I Guide My Child's TV Viewing?* lists psychologist John Murray's recommendations for actions parents can take to deal with violent programs:

- Watch at least one episode of each program your child watches so you know how violent it is.
- When you are viewing together, discuss the violence with your child. Talk about why the violence happened and how painful it was. Ask your child for ideas about how the conflict could have been resolved without violence.
- Explain to your child how violence on entertainment programs is faked and what might happen if other people casually tried these same stunts.
- Encourage your child to watch programs with characters who cooperate and care for each other. Such programs have been shown to influence children in positive ways.

4. *Resist commercials.* Don't expect your children to resist commercials for candy and snack foods without help from you. The ability to see through a sales pitch is learned fairly late and with difficulty. Poor eating habits can be picked up early and with ease. Advertisers have market researchers, writers, producers, and saturation campaigns with big budgets on their side. When your children request foods and toys advertised on television, teach them that television makes them want things they don't necessarily need and that may even be harmful. Help the child analyze commercials. Note the exaggerated claims, and the fact that the makers of the product pay for advertising.

5. *Express your views.* The most effective way to change commercials or programs is to call your local television station. When you are offended or pleased by something on television, let the station manager know. Write or call the network or the program's sponsor. Stations, networks, and sponsors are all concerned about the effects of television on children and are responsive to parents' concerns. Be specific. Don't call or write just to complain. It is also important to voice your approval. Programs you like may not have high ratings, and your support may help keep them on the air.

If you feel a commercial is inaccurate or misleading, write down the name of the product, the channel, the time you saw the commercial, and a brief description of your concern. Then call your local Better Business Bureau with this information, or send it to the Children's Advertising Review Unit, Council of Better Business Bureaus, Inc., 845 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

6. *Get help.* Action for Children's Television (ACT, 20 University Road, Cambridge, MA 02138) has been a leading public interest group.

This ERIC Digest was adapted from two publications:

How Can I Guide My Child's TV Viewing? from the Center for Early Education and Development of the University of Minnesota, and

Television and the Family, Copyright c 1986, American Academy of Pediatrics. Reprinted with permission.

For More Information

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ERIC DIGEST No. 77

Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

GUIDELINES FOR WORKING WITH ADULT LEARNERS

Between 1969 and 1984, the number of adults participating in educational programs increased 79 percent, and the number of activities doubled (Hill 1987). The growth of adult education is being stimulated by a number of broad demographic, economic, and societal trends including the following:

- The increased realization that adults continue to change and grow throughout their lives and frequently seek assistance in dealing with these changes
- The greater proportion of adults in the total population due to increased longevity and declining birthrates
- The higher demand for occupational and professional training due to the presence of the baby boom generation in the work force
- The growing need for job retraining caused by economic and technological changes that have eliminated some jobs and revised the nature of many others

This **ERIC Digest**, a revision of Fact Sheet No. 25 (Imel [1982]), provides guidelines to consider when developing educational programs for adults in any setting. It focuses on the characteristics of adults that affect learning, describing how to develop a climate that is conducive to adult learning as well as identifying appropriate evaluation strategies. Brief reviews of some recent resources conclude the **Digest**.

Characteristics of Adult Learners

Adults possess characteristics that influence how they learn and that should be considered when developing instructional programs. Although it is important to realize that each adult is an individual, some generalizations can be applied to adult learners. Through a review of the literature on adult learners, Kalamas (1987) identified the following:

- **Individuals Can Learn throughout Their Lives.** Unfortunately, adults are frequently their own worst enemies when it comes to doubting their ability to learn new things. Older adults, particularly, may need encouragement to engage in learning activities. One advantage adults have over youth in their ability to learn is a broad range of experience. These experiences enhance their ability to perceive, process, and use information and provide a foundation for gaining additional knowledge.
- **Adult Life Cycles Influence Learning.** Every adult progresses through a series of life phases. In each phase of life, certain behaviors and skills—known as developmental tasks—need to be learned. Life-cycle phases influence how individuals approach learning as well as what they want or need to learn. Designers of instructional programs should consider the developmental needs of adult learners at specific developmental stages. (See Naylor [1985] for more information about adult development.)
- **Adults Learn What They Consider Important.** Adult learning is usually motivated by the need to acquire a new skill or make a decision. When adults perceive a need to learn something, they are generally capable of working very hard. Since most adult learning is voluntary, adults also have the prerogative of dropping out of programs that do not meet their needs.
- **Adults Are Often Time-Conscious Learners.** Adults have many roles (e.g., spouse, parent, employee, community member) in addition to that of learner. Therefore, most want to meet their educational goals as directly, quickly, and efficiently as possible.
- **What Is Important Varies among Adults.** Adults engage in educational programs for a variety of reasons. Most—75 percent—enroll for job-related reasons, but others take nonoccupational courses for personal or social reasons (Hill 1987). Because adults know what goals are important to them, they tend to do best in educational experiences that provide what they value.
- **Adults Wish to Be Treated as Such—Sometimes.** By adulthood, individuals have developed an independent view of self, and most adults want to be treated as if they were responsible individuals with the capacity to determine things for themselves. Adult learning situations should be designed to allow adults to retain as much autonomy as possible. Because some adults have experienced only structured and teacher-centered learning environments, they may need assistance in accepting responsibility for their own learning.
- **Biological Changes May Affect Learning.** Although adults can continue to learn throughout their lives, physical changes may need to be considered when planning and conducting educational activities. Biological changes such as speed and reaction time, visual and auditory acuity, and intellectual functioning may all affect learning.

Creating a Climate for Adult Learning

Creating a learning environment that meets the needs of adult learners is a key element of successful adult education programs. The challenge is to create a nonthreatening atmosphere in which adults have permission and are expected to share in the responsibility for their learning. Following are some strategies for accomplishing this:

- **Establish Adult-to-Adult Rapport.** To build rapport with adults in the learning environment, use positive nonverbal communication, deal with the whole person, address learners as equals, share authority, and employ informal room arrangements such as placing all the chairs in a circle, in a U, or around a table. Adult students also appreciate instructors who share appropriate information about themselves and who are approachable and accessible.
- **Create a Participatory Environment.** A participatory environment, which helps learners assume responsibility for their own learning, can be created by involving the learners in deciding on course content and establishing class management guidelines, having learners serve as instructional resources, and monitoring learner satisfaction throughout the activity. Providing multiple learning options, which enables learners to choose those methods

and materials best suited to their needs, will also encourage participation.

- **Facilitate Adult Independence.** Instructors can help adults assume more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to learn on their own, serving as a role model of an independent adult learner, and teaching decision-making and problem-solving techniques.
- **Provide for Individual Differences.** Because they have an independent self-concept, adults view themselves as individuals, and it is important to acknowledge adults as individuals in the educational setting. Individual differences can be accommodated by using a variety of instructional techniques, providing appropriate and varied instructional materials, relating instruction to learners' experience, and adjusting for physiological and psychological differences.

Evaluating Adult Learning

Although many adult learning activities do not require formal evaluation procedures, adult learners need to learn how to identify and evaluate their own resources, abilities, and knowledge realistically. When formal evaluation is required, "[e]valuation strategies for adults are most effective when traditional authority roles are de-emphasized, and the learner's role as an autonomous, responsible adult is emphasized" (Kopp 1987, p. 50). Adults should be involved not only in determining what they learn but also in identifying and establishing their own evaluation techniques.

Kopp suggests the following three collaborative approaches that can be used in establishing a basis for evaluation:

1. **Group decision making** in which class members participate jointly in identifying and selecting evaluation strategies to be used
2. **Learning contracts** that help learners clarify their objectives, document their learning and evaluation plans, and commit themselves to the work they have contracted to do
3. **Grading contracts** that provide learners with options in the relative weight of evaluation activities and in the amount of work they will perform

Resources on Adult Learning

A number of recent publications can be used in designing programs for adult learners. In addition to those listed in the References, the following books will serve as helpful resources for those seeking more information on this aspect of adult education.

- **Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn** (Wlodkowski 1985) presents 68 motivational strategies designed to increase adult learning in a wide variety of settings. Also described are the characteristics and skills of a motivating instructor.
- **Helping Adults Learn** (Knox 1986) is a comprehensive guide to all aspects of planning, implementing, and evaluating programs for adult learners. The book includes practical "how-to" advice that is supported by examples from practice as well as checklists and guidelines to be used in program development.
- **Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning** (Brookfield 1986) critically examines and analyzes current approaches to adult learning, presents a comprehensive review of how adults learn, and proposes ways to develop more creative, up-to-date adult education programs. Brookfield explores what he calls the "theory-practice disjunctions" between theories-in-use and espoused theories.

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[Note: There are six modules in this series. Refer to ERIC Document Reproduction Service Nos. ED 289 964 through 969.]

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HELPING ADOLESCENTS ADJUST TO GIFTEDNESS

Young gifted people between the ages of 11 and 15 frequently report a range of problems as a result of their abundant gifts: perfectionism, competitiveness, unrealistic appraisal of their gifts, rejection from peers, confusion due to mixed messages about their talents, and parental and social pressures to achieve, as well as problems with unchallenging school programs or increased expectations. Some encounter difficulties in finding and choosing friends, a course of study, and, eventually, a career. The developmental issues that all adolescents encounter exist also for gifted students, yet they are further complicated by the special needs and characteristics of being gifted. Once counselors and parents are aware of these obstacles, they seem better able to understand and support gifted adolescents. Caring adults can assist these young people to "own" and develop their talents by understanding and responding to adjustment challenges and coping strategies.

Challenges to Adjustment

Several dynamics of giftedness continually interfere with adjustment gains during adolescence. Buescher (1986) has found that, during the early years of adolescence, gifted young people encounter several potent obstacles, singly or in combination.

Ownership. Talented adolescents simultaneously "own" and yet question the validity and reality of the abilities they possess. Some researchers (Olszewski, Kulieke, & Willis, 1987) have identified patterns of disbelief, doubt, and lack of self-esteem among older students and adults: the so-called "impostor syndrome" described by many talented individuals. While talents have been recognized in many cases at an early age, doubts about the accuracy of identification and the objectivity of parents or favorite teachers linger (Delisle & Galbraith, 1987; Galbraith, 1983). The power of peer pressure toward conformity, coupled with any adolescent's wavering sense of being predictable or intact, can lead to the denial of even the most outstanding ability. The conflict that ensues, whether mild or acute, needs to be resolved by gaining a more mature "ownership" and responsibility for the identified talent.

A second basic pressure often experienced by gifted students is that, since they have been given gifts in abundance, they feel they must give of themselves in abundance. Often it is subtly implied that their abilities belong to parents, teachers, and society.

Dissonance. By their own admission, talented adolescents often feel like perfectionists. They have learned to set their standards high, to expect to do more and be more than their abilities might allow. Childhood desires to do demanding tasks *perfectly* become compounded during adolescence. It is not uncommon for talented adolescents to experience real dissonance between what is actually done and how well they *expected* it to be accomplished. Often the dissonance perceived by young people is far greater than most parents or teachers realize.

Taking Risks. While risk taking has been used to characterize younger gifted and talented children, it ironically decreases with age, so that the bright adolescent is much less likely to take chances than others. Why the shift in risk-taking behaviors? Gifted adolescents appear to be more aware of the repercussions of certain activities, whether these are positive or negative. They have learned to measure the decided advantages and disadvantages of numerous opportunities and to weigh alternatives. Yet their feigned agility at this too often leads them to reject even those acceptable activities that carry some risk (e.g., advanced placement courses, stiff competitions, public presentations), for which high success is less predictable and lower standards of performance less acceptable in their eyes. One other possible cause for less risk taking could be the need to maintain control—to remain in spheres of influence where challenging relationships, demanding coursework and teachers, or intense competition cannot enter without absolute personal control.

Competing Expectations. Adolescents are vulnerable to criticism, suggestions, and emotional appeals from others. Parents, friends, siblings, and teachers are all eager to add their own expectations and observations to even the brightest students' intentions and goals. Often, others' expectations for talented young people compete with their own dreams and plans. Delisle (1985), in particular, has pointed out that the "pull" of an adolescent's own expectations must swim against the strong current posed by the "push" of others' desires and demands. The dilemma is complicated by the numerous options within the reach of a highly talented student: The greater the talent, the greater the expectations and outside interference.

Gifted adolescents consistently report dramatic episodes of being pushed to the point of doubt and despair by insensitive teachers, peers, and even parents. Teachers in secondary schools, in particular, have tried to disprove the talents of individual students, saying, in effect, "Prove to me you are as gifted as you think you are." Coping with the vagaries of adolescence while also proving oneself again and again in the classroom or peer group significantly drains energy allocated for the normal tasks of adjustment and leads to frequent frustration and isolation.

Impatience. Like most other adolescents, gifted students can be impatient in many ways: eager to find solutions for difficult questions, anxious to develop satisfying friendships, and prone to selecting difficult but immediate alternatives for complex decisions. The predisposition for impulsive decision making, coupled with exceptional talent, can make young adolescents particularly intolerant of ambiguous, unresolved situations. Their impatience with a lack of clear-cut answers, options, or decisions drives them to seek answers where none readily exist, relying on an informing, though immature, sense of wisdom. The anger and disappointment when hasty resolutions fail can be difficult to surmount, particularly when less capable peers gloat about these failures.

Premature Identity. It appears that the weight of competing expectations, low tolerance for ambiguity, and the pressure of multiple potentials each feed very early attempts to achieve an adultlike identity, a stage normally achieved after the age of 21. This can create a serious problem for talented adolescents. They seem to reach out prematurely for career choices that will short-cut the normal process of identity crisis and resolution.

Coping Strategies

How can talented adolescents cope with the myriad obstacles to developing their talents? A study of young adolescents who participated in a talent search program Buescher & Higham (1985) suggested various strategies. Table 1 depicts the strategies suggested by the adolescents, arranged according to their assessment of acceptablity for use.

The strategies were influenced by such factors as age, sex, and participation in programs for gifted students. For example, over the course of 4 years (ages 11 to 15), "using one's talent to help others" moved from second place to first, by way of third. "Achieving in school in areas outside academics" appeared to rise in popularity until the age of 14 but then droped to third place. Students participating in special programs for the gifted were less likely, as they grew older, to mask their true abilities. Other studies have indicated that gifted females appear to be somewhat vulnerable to the pull of cultural expectations that drive them toward seeking peer acceptance rather than leadership and the full development of their abilities (Olszewski-Kubilius & Kulieke, 1989).

Table 1. Coping Strategies Suggested by Adolescents

Strategy	*Weighted Ranking*
Accept and use abilities to help peers do better in classes.	10
Make friends with other students with exceptional talents.	9
Select programs and classes designed for gifted/talented students.	8
Build more relationships with adults.	7
Achieve in areas at school outside academics.	6
Develop/excel in talent areas outside school setting.	5
Be more active in community groups where age is no object.	4
Avoid programs designed for gifted/talented students.	3
Adjust language and behavior to disguise true abilities from your peers.	2
Act like a "brain" so peers leave you alone.	1
Pretend not to know as much as you do.	0

Note: 10 = most acceptable to students; 0 = least acceptable.

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Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

HELPING AT-RISK YOUTH MAKE THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION

The changing demographics of the U.S. work force mean that programs and services to help youth make a successful transition from school to work will be increasingly needed throughout this decade. Such services are necessary if women, minorities, and immigrants are to make up the predicted 80 percent of new workers by the year 2000, and if the United States is to be successful in an increasingly competitive world marketplace.

This **ERIC Digest** is based on Feichtner (1989), a synthesis of research on school-to-work transition. The digest describes transition services and the youth who need them, lists programmatic barriers to effective delivery of services, describes models for service delivery, and discusses successful practices.

Services and At-Risk Youth

School-to-work transition services are intended to help youth develop the skills and attitudes they need to find and keep employment, to obtain and maintain a meaningful adult lifestyle, and to develop positive social interactions. The most accepted outcome measure of success for transition service programs is the eventual employment of the at-risk youth. A wide array of services may be necessary, including legal help, housing services, health care, financial aid, employment assistance, career guidance, basic skills education, occupational training, language assistance, transportation, and child care.

The concept of providing school-to-work transition services originated in an attempt to bridge the gap between the secondary school's protective environment and adult life, including employment, for disabled students. Service eligibility has now been broadened to include students with economic or educational disadvantages and youth who are not proficient in English. Other groups who may need special transition services include teenage parents, displaced homemakers, displaced workers, and incarcerated youth and adults.

Transition services have been promoted and shaped by federal legislation. Feichtner cites 12 such laws and 4 policy initiatives and priorities, including the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, Rehabilitation Act, Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). The fact that services are provided under the auspices of multiple laws, agencies, guidelines, and policies has caused some problems.

Barriers

Feichtner identifies programmatic (as opposed to societal) barriers to the effective delivery of transition services to at-risk youth. The most significant of these barriers is the lack of a mandated systematic process for delivering the services. Other barriers are--

- Lack of coordination between agencies, which often results in competitive and duplicative efforts
- Confusion among parents and youths about what programs and services are available
- Limited use of parents as resources
- Lack of case managers for secondary students with disadvantages or limited English proficiency
- Lack of career exploration programs in middle schools
- Absence of a computerized information management system to control the vast amount of information needed for transition decision making and evaluation

Existing Models

Four types of models describe aspects of an effective service delivery system.

Curriculum Content Models

Programs designed around these models attempt to provide the content knowledge and basic, interpersonal, social, employability, and occupational skills the youths need to become employable.

Instructional Stages Models

Programs based on these models consider the transition from school to work as a developmental process that occurs in four stages: career awareness, exploration, preparation, and implementation. Because these models view transition as a lifelong process made continuous by shifting job requirements and work patterns, they incorporate multiple transition points--not just the one after secondary school.

Supportive Services Models

These programs offer services intended to overcome disadvantages--medical treatment, transportation, child care, financial assistance, equipment purchase, diagnosis, evaluation, counseling, assessment, language assistance, recreation, protection, and job placement.

Articulation and Communication Models

These models focus on coordination among the many transition-related organizations, including federal agencies that identify needed legislation and develop the regulations and guidelines for implementing it, state agencies that initiate and facilitate collaboration, and local agencies that implement the collaboration that results in successful transition.

Successful Practices

Successful transition service practices include (1) the availability and identification of a wide array of community services; (2) systematic procedures for prescribing appropriate services; (3) articulation between those services; and (4) systematic tracking of information regarding the availability, cost, and evaluation of services.

Array of Services

Because the needs of at-risk youth are so diverse, program success depends largely on having available and having identified a variety of services to meet those needs.

Systematic Procedures

Systematic procedures for prescribing appropriate services are necessary because the prescriptions must reflect the complicated needs and options of individual youths. Several techniques are often involved in systematic procedures, including individualized plans, case managers, transition planning guides, transition assistance centers, and parent resource centers.

Transition is facilitated through the use of an Individualized Education Plan, Individualized Training Plan, or Individualized Vocational Education Plan. Such plans typically list the abilities, skills, interests, aptitudes, achievements, and knowledge of the student as they relate to various occupational goals. Each plan is developed by a team that includes parents. The team is headed by a case manager if the youth is a disabled secondary student. Out-of-school youth who receive bilingual vocational training or JTPA services may also have a case manager. However, there are no formalized case managers identified for secondary students with disadvantages or limited English proficiency.

Some states have published transition planning guides that describe in detail the transition services that are available and the process through which they can be obtained. Some guides provide space in which individuals can document the process as it occurs.

Articulation of Services

Successful programs are skillful at articulating their services to avoid duplication and omission. They link services at all levels so that students can move from one course, program, or service to another--between or within agencies. Successful articulation depends on linkages between the people who provide services at the various agencies. The linkages can be both within single agencies or institutions and between multiple agencies or institutions.

State-level interagency agreements are one mechanism that Feichtner cites as useful in facilitating collaboration between agencies. Examples are--

- The Texas Interagency Agreement for the Provision of Statewide Transition Services, in which three state agencies agreed to develop jointly a strategic plan designating personnel, funds, timelines, and evaluation criteria for services; develop a coordinated process for screening, diagnosis, and program development; and implement a plan for cost-sharing, joint funding, and inservice training.

- The California Compact, under which California employers, two state departments, and a federal department worked to establish long-term public-private partnerships to help disadvantaged youth. Among the Compact's goals are to provide motivation, support, and information necessary for students to stay in school; and to provide financial aid, information, and scholarships for postsecondary education.

- The Boston Compact, in which the city school department, the business community, higher education institutions, and the JTPA private industry council work to improve the educational performance and opportunities of disadvantaged students. Among the goals are increasing school attendance by 5 percent, expanding an existing work-study program from 3 to 6 of the city's 17 high schools, increasing postsecondary enrollment by 25 percent, and providing career counseling, screening, and employment referral.

Feichtner cites four principles for interagency collaboration that resulted from the work of 35 representatives of education, county government, adult services providers, employers, and parents in Montgomery County, Maryland:

- Establish a common vocabulary for describing the programs, services, and procedures so each member understands the entire transition process
- Identify each organization's area of expertise, the resources each will contribute, and what each will get out of the arrangement
- Have each organization indicate how clients can gain access to its services and what treatment clients can expect
- Design service collaboration to alleviate rather than impose responsibilities

A good example of intra-agency cooperation is the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services at Harnell College in California. The program was designed to recruit, retrain, graduate, and/or facilitate transfer of disadvantaged and minority students. It provides intensive assistance in admissions, registration, financial aid, curriculum planning, tutoring, counseling (including peer counseling), and university transfer.

Systematic Tracking of Information

A database management system to coordinate information about students' needs and to match those needs with available programs and services is needed to keep the delivery of transition services from becoming fragmented and ineffective. Feichtner points out that such a system can also be used for cost-benefit analysis and for conducting basic research on the transition process itself.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Helping Children Cope With Divorce: The School Counselor's Role

The U.S. Census bureau estimates that approximately 50 percent of all American children born in 1982 will live in a single-parent home sometime during their first 18 years, mostly as a result of separation or divorce. Schools can represent one stable force in their lives during the family transition, and school personnel can help them cope with the effects of divorce.

Age Differences

Research examining children's mechanisms for coping with divorce has shown that children's reactions depend on their age and developmental stage at the time the divorce occurs. (Cantrell, 1986; Freeman & Couchman, 1985; Kieffer, 1982; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

Early Latency (ages 5-8). Children between the ages of five and eight at the time of their parents' divorce tend to react with great sadness. Some may feel fearful, insecure, helpless, and abandoned by the missing parent. Younger children often express guilt and blame themselves for their parents' divorce.

Late Latency (ages 9-12). Children in late latency at the time of their parents' divorce are distinguished from younger children by their feelings of intense anger. Nine- to 12-year-olds may still feel loneliness, loss, shock, surprise, and fear, but anger and possibly the rejection of one parent are the predominant reactions of this age group.

Adolescence (ages 13-18). Adolescents whose parents are divorcing also experience loss, sadness, anger, and pain. A typical adolescent reaction to parental divorce, however, often involves acting-out behaviors. Sexual promiscuity, delinquency, the use of alcohol and drugs, and aggressive behavior have all been identified as adolescent reactions to parental divorce.

In-School Reactions

In Wallerstein and Kelly's (1980) five-year longitudinal study of 60 families and 131 children of divorce, teachers reported that two-thirds of the children showed changes in school behavior and/or academic performance following the parental separation. Cantrell (1986) concurs that teachers frequently report observing changes in academic achievement, moods, attendance patterns, and behavior of children adjusting to their parents' divorce.

School Role

The school is in an excellent position for offering supportive services to children of divorce (Kieffer, 1982). Children spend much time in school, where the continuity and routine can offer a safe environment for interventions. Counselors, teachers, and other school personnel are available on a daily basis and can provide help that avoids both the stigma and the expense associated with seeking help from private practitioners. Finally, the number of children in the school provides the possibility for group interventions.

School Counselor's Role

The school counselor can provide valuable assistance directly through counseling with the children and indirectly through services to school administrators, teachers, and parents. Scherman and Lepak (1986) suggest that counselors not view divorce as a single problem with negative consequences, but focus on changes caused by divorce (e.g., single-parent homes, changes in routines and life styles, visitation patterns with relatives) and their positive, negative, or neutral effects on the children.

Working with School Administrators. Drake (1981) identified 10 major issues facing administrators with regard to children of divorce: school territorial rights, parental access to school records, release of the child from school, school visits, medical emergencies, financial responsibility, the child's surname, retention, confidentiality of records, and parental access to school functions. Counselors can consult with school administrators on these policy issues and help them to understand the legal implications of divorce for the school.

Because kidnapping of a child by the noncustodial parent may be a concern, schools need to guard against the possibility of parental kidnapping. Burns and Brassard (1982) suggest that schools:

1. Ask parents to inform the school about custody concerns.
2. Require parents to show legal documentation of sole custody when they report a sole custody arrangement.
3. Ensure that teachers are aware of custody status.
4. Maintain an office list of children and custodial parents.

Working with Teachers. School counselors can help teachers and other school personnel by conducting in-services on the effects of divorce on children and their classroom behavior. Counselors can also help to sensitize teachers to the transition a child is experiencing and to the implications of that transition. Teachers may need to change their choice of words, or to adapt their curriculum and classroom resource materials to include various family types.

Working with Parents. Counselors can make parents aware of the special needs of their child during the divorce transition. A study by Hammond (1979) of third- to sixth-graders, for example, revealed that 74 percent of the 82 children who were from separated or divorced families believed that school counselors could help by talking with parents of children who asked the counselor to do so. Counselors can also assist parents by referring them to divorce support groups in the community, by recommending reading materials that deal with families of divorce, and by suggesting ways that parents can help their children adjust to divorce.

Working with Children. Intervention strategies with children will depend on each child's individual needs. Kieffer (1982) suggests an adaptation of Kelly and Wallerstein's (1977) Divorce Specific Assessment which involves determining the child's developmental achievements, interviewing the child about his/her response to the family situation, and evaluating the child's existing support systems.

Hammond's (1979) study found that over 86 percent of third- to sixth-graders interviewed thought that counselors could best help children whose parents are divorcing by encouraging the children to talk about their feelings. Approximately the same percentage reported that counselors could also help by providing children with books to read about divorce.

Individual Counseling. Although there exists little research testing the efficacy of individual counseling with children of divorce, clinicians report a desirable change in the child's affect as a result of individual counseling. Individual counseling is usually reserved for children with long-term, unproductive coping behaviors and for children who cannot work well in groups.

Group Counseling. Robson (1982) reports that children's groups on divorce, led by elementary school counselors with specific strategies to meet the needs of these children, have been extremely successful. Divorce groups are a popular choice for counselors because of their cost effectiveness and multiple benefits. Eighty-two percent of the students in Hammond's (1979) study reported that a group counseling situation for children would be beneficial.

Cantrell (1986) suggests that counselors using group counseling with children of divorce deal with the developmental responses of the children while helping them to label and understand their feelings, realize that others are having similar feelings and experiences, understand the divorce process, learn new coping skills, and feel good about themselves and their parents.

Several types of group counseling are available which could be beneficial to children of divorce:

1. Situational/transitional groups offer emotional support; catharsis; and information sharing about stress, mutual feelings, and similar experiences.

2. Structured groups can teach children how to deal with crisis situations through group discussions, role playing, and the use of drawings and collages.

3. One-day workshops for children between the ages of 10 and 17 can use sentence completion exercises, assertiveness training, and films about divorce to help group members explore values and assumptions about marriage and divorce, learn to express and cope with their own and their parents' feelings, and develop communication skills for handling difficult situations.

Conclusion

In summary, school personnel can offer support for children of divorce and for their divorcing parents. Freeman and Couchman (1985) conclude that counselors and teachers working with children of divorce can be most effective when they:

1. Provide opportunities for students to discuss their feelings.
2. Allow children privacy when needed.
3. Recommend and encourage the use of age-appropriate resource materials.
4. Provide a stable environment.
5. Maintain consistent expectations and routines.
6. Engage in supportive communication.
7. Inform parents about child's progress or difficulties.
8. Encourage parents to be honest, direct, supportive, and firm with their children.
9. Be aware of language which may be offensive to children of divorce.
10. Plan and label events for parents, rather than specifically for mothers or fathers.

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Digest

DIGEST #E488

EC–90

HELPING GIFTED STUDENTS WITH STRESS MANAGEMENT

What is stress?

Stress is the body's general response to any intense physical, emotional, or mental demand placed on it by oneself or others. While racing to meet a deadline, dealing with a difficult person, or earning a poor grade are all stressful, so are the excitement of playing a lively game of tennis, falling in love, and being selected to join a special program for gifted students.

How can a youngster experience stress when nothing bad is happening?

Anything can be a stressor if it lasts long enough, happens often enough, is strong enough, or is perceived as stress. Working diligently on a project, performing many simple but boring tasks, or earning an "A" grade when one expected an "A+" may all be stressful.

Is a gifted student more likely to feel stress than others?

Many gifted youngsters have a heightened sensitivity to their surroundings, to events, to ideas, and to expectations. Some experience their own high expectations for achievement as a relentless pressure to excel. Constant striving to live up to self-expectations—or those of others—to be first, best, or both can be very stressful. With every new course, new teacher, or new school questions arise about achievement and performance, since every new situation carries with it the frightening risk of being mediocre. Striving becomes even more stressful when unrealistic or unclear expectations are imposed by adults or peers. The pressure to excel, accompanied by other concerns such as feeling different, self-doubt (the "imposter" syndrome), and the need to prove their giftedness can drain the energy of gifted students and result in additional stress.

Stress occurs even when everything is going well. Youngsters get tired from their constant efforts and may secretly fear that next time they will not be as successful.

What are some other stresses on a gifted student?

Many gifted students accept responsibility for a variety of activities such as a demanding courseload; leadership in school activities, clubs, or sports; and part-time jobs. Even if it were humanly possible, doing everything well would be physically and emotionally stressful.

Vacations may be stressful if students are comfortable only when achieving and succeeding. Taking time off may make them feel nervous and lacking control.

Gifted students need intellectual challenge. Boring, monotonous busy-work is very stressful for individuals who prefer thinking and reasoning activities. Boredom may result in anger, resentment, or, in some cases, setting personal goals for achievement and success that significantly exceed those of parents or school.

Some gifted students value independence and leadership, yet the separation they feel from their peers results in loneliness and fewer opportunities to relieve stress. Finding a peer group can be difficult, particularly for adolescents. Some experience a conflict between belonging to a group and using their extraordinary abilities.

Gifted students are complex thinkers, persuasively able to argue both sides of any question. This ability, however, may complicate decisions. Students may lack information about and experience with resources, processes, outcomes, or priorities that help tip an argument toward a clear solution. Furthermore, not every problem has one obviously correct answer. Compromise and accommodation are realities in the adult world, but they are not easily perceived from a young person's viewpoint. Thus, decision making may be a very stressful process.

How can stress hurt a gifted student's self-esteem?

During the early years, school may be easy, with minimum effort required for success. If students are not challenged, they conclude that "giftedness" means instant learning, comprehension, and mastery, and that outstanding achievement follows naturally. As years pass, however, schoolwork becomes more difficult. Some students discover that they must work harder to earn top grades and that they have not developed productive study habits. Many suspect they are no longer gifted, and their sense of self-worth is undermined.

Stress can hamper the very abilities that make these students gifted. Stress clouds thinking, reduces concentration, and impairs decision making. It leads to forgetfulness and a loss of ability to focus keenly on a task, and it makes students overly sensitive to criticism. Under these conditions, they perform less well and are more upset by their failures.

Gifted students have so much potential. How can that be stressful?

Abundant gifts and the potential for success in many different subjects and careers may increase opportunities and lead to complex choices. Limiting options is a confusing and upsetting process because it means saying "no" to some attractive alternatives. A person cannot prepare to become an architect *and* a financial planner, or an advertising executive *and* a scientist. At some point, the education needed for one career splits from that needed for the other. To set career goals, students must know themselves well as individuals. They must understand their own personalities, values, and goals and use self-awareness as a guide for making decisions. These activities are all stressful.

How can gifted students cope with stress?

Some ways of coping with stress are healthy; others are not. Some healthy ways of handling stress include the following:

Change the source of the stress. Do something else for a while. Put down those study notes and jog for an hour.

Confront the source of the stress. If it is a person, persuade him or her to remove the stress. Ask the teacher for an extension on a project. Sit down with the person driving you crazy and talk about ways you might better work together.

Talk about the source of stress. Rid yourself of frustration. Find a good listener and complain. Talk through possible solutions.

Shift your perspective. Tell yourself that each new situation or problem is a new challenge, and that there is something to be learned from every experience. Try to see the humorous side of the situation.

Learn skills and attitudes that make tasks easier and more successful. Practice effective organization and time-management skills. For example, large projects are easier and less overwhelming when broken down into manageable steps. Learn to type and revise assignments on a word processor. Learn about yourself and your priorities, and use the information to make decisions. Learn how to say "no" gracefully when someone offers you another attractive (or unpleasant) task about which you have a choice. Tell yourself that this unpleasantness will be over soon and that the whole process will bring you closer to reaching your goal. Mark the days that are left on the calendar, and enjoy crossing out each one as you near the finish.

Take time out for enjoyable activities. Everyone needs a support system. Find friends, teachers, or relatives with whom you have fun. Spend time with these people when you can be yourself and set aside the pressures of school, work, or difficult relationships. As a reward for your efforts, give yourself work breaks. Listen to your favorite music, shoot baskets, or participate in some other brief activity that is mentally restful or fun.

Ignore the source of the stress. Practice a little healthy procrastination and put a pleasant activity ahead of the stressful one. This, is, of course, only a short-term solution.

Get regular physical exercise and practice sound nutrition. Physical activity not only provides time out, but also changes your body chemistry as you burn off muscle tension built up from accommodating stress. Exercise also increases resistance to illness. Nutritious food and regular meals help regulate your body chemistry and keep you functioning at your sharpest. Eating healthy and attractively prepared food can be an enjoyable activity on its own.

The following are some *unhealthy* ways students cope with stress:

Escaping through alcohol, drugs, frequent illness, sleep, overeating, or starving themselves. These strategies suggest a permanent withdrawal or avoidance rather than a time out.

Selecting strategies to avoid failure. Gifted students closely link their identities to excellence and achievement. Failure, or even the perception of failure, seriously threatens their self-esteem. By not trying, or by selecting impossible goals, students can escape having their giftedness questioned. Only their lack of effort will be questioned.

Aiming too low. This reduces stress by eliminating intense pressure or possible feelings of failure. Dogged procrastination in starting projects, selecting less competitive colleges or less rigorous courses, or dropping out of school rather than bringing home poor grades allows students to avoid feelings of failure in the short run. Sadly, this sets the stage for long-term disappointment caused by a destructive coping style.

Overscheduling daily life with schoolwork and extracurricular activities, selecting impossibly demanding courseloads, or fussing endlessly over assignments in vain attempts to make them perfect. With this strategy, it is possible to succeed only through superhuman effort; thus the student can save face by setting goals too high for anyone to achieve.

How can I tell whether or not a gifted student is experiencing burnout?

Not all gifted youngsters are stressed by the same events. Individual responses to stress also differ: Younger students do not tend to respond to stress in the same way that teenagers do. Since each student is unique, parents and teachers will have to watch carefully to know whether a child is stressed to the point of constructive excitement or to the point of damaging overload.

The following checklist includes many, but not all, symptoms of burnout:

_____ Student is no longer happy or pleasantly excited about school activities, but, rather, is negative or cynical toward work, teachers, classmates, parents, and the whole school- and achievement-centered experience.

_____ Student approaches most school assignments with resignation or resentment.

_____ Student exhibits boredom.

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ERIC Digest

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HELPING YOUR HIGHLY GIFTED CHILD

Most parents greet the discovery that their child is not merely gifted but *highly* or *profoundly* gifted with a combination of pride, excitement, and fear. They may set out to find experts or books to help them cope with raising such a child, only to find that there are no real experts, only a couple of books, and very little understanding of extreme intellectual potential and how to develop it. This digest deals with some areas of concern and provides a few practical suggestions based on the experience of other parents and the modest amount of research available.

Differences

To understand highly gifted children it is essential to realize that, although they are children with the same basic needs as other children, they are very different. Adults cannot ignore or gloss over their differences without doing serious damage to these children, for the differences will not go away or be outgrown. They affect almost every aspect of these children's intellectual and emotional lives.

A microscope analogy is one useful way of understanding extreme intelligence. If we say that all people look at the world through a lens, with some lenses cloudy or distorted, some clear, and some magnified, we might say that gifted individuals view the world through a microscope lens and highly gifted individuals view it through an electron microscope. They see ordinary things in very different ways and often see what others simply cannot see. Although there are advantages to this heightened perception, there are disadvantages as well.

Since many children eventually become aware of being different, it is important to prepare yourself for your child's reactions. When your child's giftedness has been identified, you might open a discussion using the microscope analogy. If you are concerned that such a discussion will promote arrogance, be sure to let the child know that unusual gifts, like hair and eye color, are not earned. It is neither admirable nor contemptible to be highly gifted. It is what one does with one's abilities that is important.

A United Front

As in most other aspects of parenting, it is important for both parents (or the adults who bear primary responsibility for raising the child) to agree on some basic issues regarding the child's potential. Some parents of exceptionally gifted children were themselves gifted or exceptionally gifted children. If they did not learn to accept and understand their own giftedness, they may find it difficult to accept their child's unusual capacities. Raising a highly gifted child may help parents come to terms with many difficult aspects of their own lives, but it helps if they focus first on the needs of the child and come to an agreement about how to meet them.

What Highly Gifted Children Need

Exceptionally gifted children have two primary needs. First, they need to feel comfortable with themselves and with the differences that simultaneously open possibilities and create difficulty. Second, they need to develop their astonishing potential. There is a strong internal drive to develop one's abilities. Thwarting that drive may lead to crippling emotional damage. Throughout the parenting years, it is wise to keep in mind that the healthiest long-term goal is not necessarily a child who gains fame, fortune, and a Nobel Prize, but one who becomes a comfortable adult and uses gifts productively.

The Early Years

Before your child begins formal schooling, differences can be handled by your willingness to follow the child's lead and meet needs as they arise. It is possible and important to treat an infant's or toddler's precocity with a degree of normalcy. For example, a 2-year-old who prefers and plays appropriately with toys designed for 6-year-olds should be given those toys. The 3-year-old who reads should be given books. The child who speaks very early and with a sophisticated vocabulary should be spoken to in kind.

Public Attitudes

Even when parents can take precocious achievements in stride, friends, family, and strangers may not. Unthinking people will comment (often loudly and in front of the child) that a 2- or 3-year-old who sits in the grocery cart reading packages aloud is a phenomenon.

It may be surprisingly difficult to avoid letting parental pride lure you into encouraging your child to "perform" in public. Keep in mind the goal of making the child as comfortable as possible with individual differences. The more casually you accept unusual early accomplishments, the more your child will be able to see those accomplishments as normal. Later, when gifts are no longer quite as noticeable, the child will not feel that what made him or her valuable has somehow been lost.

Multiple Ages

Highly gifted children are many ages simultaneously. A 5-year-old may read like a 7-year-old, play chess like a 12-year-old, talk like a 13-year-old, and share toys like a 2-year-old. A child may move with lightning speed from a reasoned discussion of the reasons for taking turns on the playground to a full-scale temper tantrum when not allowed to be first on the swing. You can help yourself maneuver among the child's ages by reading about developmental norms (Gesell is a good guide) so that you are ready for (and avoid punishing) behavior that, although it seems childish in a precocious child, is absolutely age appropriate.

School

If your 9-month-old begins speaking in full sentences, you probably will not tell the child to stop and wait till other 9-month-olds catch up. You would not limit such a child to using nouns because that is as much speech as most 9-month-olds can handle. However, in public or private school that may be the approach some educators use.

It is important to realize that they are not purposely setting out to keep your child from learning, although that might be the effect. Many educators have never knowingly dealt with a highly gifted child. They do not recognize them, and they do not know how to handle them. Some educators base teaching methods on developmental norms that are inappropriate for highly gifted children. Although they may be willing to make an effort to accommodate these youngsters, they may lack sufficient information or experience and not know what type of effort to make.

When a child enters school already able to do what the teacher intends to teach, there is seldom a variety of mechanisms for teaching that child something else. Even if there were a way to provide time, attention, and an appropriate curriculum, it would be necessary for the teacher to use different teaching methods. Highly gifted children learn not only faster than others, but also differently. Standard teaching methods take complex subjects and break them into small, simple bits presented one at a time. Highly gifted minds can consume large amounts of information in a single gulp, and they thrive on complexity. Giving these children simple bits of information is like feeding an elephant one blade of grass at a time—he will starve before he even realizes that anyone is trying to feed him.

When forced to work with the methods and pace of a typical school, highly gifted children may look not *more* capable than their peers, but *less* capable. Many of their normal characteristics add to this problem. Their handwriting might be very messy because their hands do not keep pace with their quick minds. Many spell poorly because they read for comprehension and do not see the words as collections of separate letters. When they try to "sound out" a word, their logical spelling of an illogical language results in errors. Most have difficulty with rote memorization, a standard learning method in the early grades.

Lack of Fit

The difficulty with highly gifted children in school may be summarized in three words: *They don't fit.* Almost all American schools organize groups of children by age. As we have seen, the highly gifted child is many ages. The child's intellectual needs might be years ahead of same-age peers, although the gulf may be larger in some subject areas than in others.

Imagine 6-year-old Rachel. She reads on a 12th-grade level, although her comprehension is "only" that of a 7th grader. She does multiplication and division, understands fractions and decimals, but counts on her fingers because she has never memorized addition and subtraction facts or multiplication tables. Her favorite interests at home are paleontology and astronomy; at school her favorite interests are lunch and recess. She collects stamps and plays chess. Although she can concentrate at her telescope for hours at a time, she cannot sit still when she is bored. She cries easily, loses her temper often, bosses other children when they "don't do it right," and cannot keep track of her personal belongings. She has a sophisticated sense of humor that disarms adults but is not understood by other children.

Putting Rachel into a regular first grade without paying special attention to her differences is a recipe for social, emotional, and educational disaster. Even if a gifted program is available (they commonly begin in third or fourth grade), it is unlikely to meet her extreme needs.

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ERIC® DIGEST

ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education The George Washington University One Dupont Circle, Suite 630 Washington, DC 20036

"High Risk" Students and Higher Education: Future Trends

Dionne J. Jones
Betty Collier Watson

Attrition is a major problem for American colleges and universities, and efforts to retain students are stymied and made complex because an increasing number of enrollees fit the socioeconomic and demographic profile of "high-risk" students. This issue is critical for the nation as a whole, because the increasing enrollment of high-risk students—minorities, females, low-income, and disabled individuals—is expected to continue into the 21st century.

High-risk students have a major impact on both institutions of higher education and society in general. Specifically, attrition affects patterns of funding, planning for facilities, and the long-term academic curricula of institutions of higher education. Attrition affects the future labor market, because students are unprepared for the required roles and responsibilities.

What causes attrition and risk? The answer to this seemingly simple question is rather complex. Indeed, a number of academic, nonacademic, and related factors are associated with attrition and risk. Academically, it appears that all students do not receive equal preparation in elementary and secondary schools. Moreover, the instructional approaches used by teachers of high-risk students tend to be inefficient. On the other hand, nonacademic factors associated with attrition and risk are generated by both teachers and students. For instance, teachers' negative attitudes affect students' self-esteem. Thus, many high-risk students develop low self-esteem and begin to cooperate with systemic forces resulting in pregnancy, dropping out, and delinquency.

To achieve success among high-risk students by the 21st century, a variety of strategies must be implemented. Special retention needs of high-risk students must be identified, and simultaneously institutions must be committed to providing both financial and academic support. In addition, social support through advising and counseling from faculty, the family, and peers is a necessary part of this equation.

Are High-risk Students and Nontraditional Students the Same?

Although the characteristics of high-risk students are sometimes correlated with those of nontraditional students, the two concepts have different denotations. The, term "high risk" is a theoretical concept based on an implicit assessment of the degree of negative risk associated with the educational experience. "High-risk students" are minorities, the academically disadvantaged, the disabled, and those of low socioeconomic status. "Nontraditional students," on the other hand, is merely a reference to the changing profile of students that emerged during the late 1960s and early 1970s as a result of demographic and sociopolitical change. Thus, nontraditional students typically include older adults, minorities, and individuals of low socioeconomic status. Some nontraditional students are not high-risk students, and, conversely, some high-risk students are traditional students. By the same token, some high-risk students are also nontraditional; for example, an older (or mature) student might also be academically underprepared.

What Is their Impact on Institutions?

Full-time enrollments are critical to an institution's continued survival, and high levels of attrition adversely affect an institution's funding, facilities planning, and long-term planning for the curriculum. Declining enrollments, for instance, leave unused building capacity. Large numbers of part-time or academically underprepared students increase the average cost per student. Furthermore, high rates of noncompletion among others in the general student body magnify the problem. Some institutions have expanded their curricula to include special courses for their high-risk students. While some changes in curriculum have been directly related to colleges' and universities' efforts to reduce attrition, other changes have been indirect. For example, the majors that students choose and the changes they make in majors affect the development of curricula. Similarly, academically underprepared students who choose majors they perceive as less academically challenging affect the development of curricula, because as the university enrolls fewer students choosing "difficult" majors and more students choosing "easy" majors, its curriculum becomes thus shaped over time.

Are High-risk Students Treated Differently in Elementary and Secondary Schools?

To understand high-risk students in institutions of higher education, one must review the different experiences of students in elementary and high schools. The school curriculum seems to benefit white males and students of high socioeconomic status more than minorities, females, and students of low socioeconomic status (Reyes and Stanic 1985). For the most part, minorities, females, and students of low socioeconomic status begin their school experience with positive attitudes. But differences in race, gender, and social class often begin to emerge during elementary school and increase by high school and college. Discrimination based on class, race, and gender influences the quality and quantity of material taught in schools.

Schools are an umbrella system or organization from which discrimination and differential treatment are often meted out. Subtle forms of discrimination can serve to undermine students' self-esteem and ultimately facilitate attrition. As a result of the social stratification in society, teachers and administrators may inherit a reality that creates an aversion to high-risk, low-income, and minority students. This internalization is then reflected in their attitudes and behavior toward those students.

Many scholars have confirmed the operation of a race-based ontology in the classroom. Teachers and others tend to separate children into "good" and "bad" students, with the polarized categories often based on race/ethnicity, gender, and class. These negative attitudes may result in prejudgment or avoidance of, for example, culturally different students to the point where students receive little or no academic or personal assistance. Such negative behaviors can lead to low aspirations and low self-esteem. And low self-esteem can in time cause students to "cooperate" with systemic forces and participate in various forms of antisocial behavior.

and other students and peers. This framework brings together the student, the teacher, the institution, parents, peers, and the community in a dynamic synthesis.

What Implications Can Be Drawn?

Students in institutions of higher education encounter risks in several forms. For example, risk might involve a higher probability of a low grade point average and/or a greater chance of not completing a college degree. It might also involve a relatively greater probability of choosing a field that is incongruent with the skills and competencies needed by the present labor market—particularly by the labor market of the 21st century. The potential for risk and attrition exists for all college enrollees, but for some subgroups, the probability of risk and attrition is extraordinarily high.

A number of causal variables interact to increase attrition and risk among particular demographic and socioeconomic populations. These variables can include academic factors (low grade point average, academic underpreparedness, for example) but could extend far beyond the scope of the academic. Indeed, each high-risk student represents the outcome of his or her individual characteristics, combined with the shaping and contouring that occurs as a consequence of a socially stratified society.

Regardless of the reason, however, attrition and risk are costly to the individual and to society, both directly and indirectly. Thus, strategies for intervention must be developed and implemented on a number of levels. Among students, high-risk students must be challenged to develop academic and nonacademic skills and competencies associated with success in college. At the institutional level, administrators, teachers, and counselors must engage in behaviors that facilitate persistence and completion of the program. In addition, institutions of higher education must make a financial commitment to high-risk students in the form of guaranteed financial assistance for the duration of their degree program. At the community level, businesses and community-based organizations have formed partnerships with educational institutions to reduce risk.

In addition to these strategies for achieving success among high-risk students, academic support services must be offered that include developing and building skills. Further, the provision of social support is vital. It can come from advisers/counselors, faculty, parents, family, and other students and peers. This framework brings together the student, the teacher, the institution, parents, peers, and the community in a dynamic synthesis.

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HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES IN ENTRY LEVEL JOBS WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT?

Educators should not, of course, limit a high school graduate's capabilities to those skills employers want from entry-level employees. It is, however, instructive to review the new and fairly consistent information about which skills both blue- and white-collar entry-level workers need in such widely varied sectors as manufacturing, retailing, banking, and services. Note, too, that, when citing desired skills, employers do not make clear whether the skills are also necessary for their more advanced positions, though many students whose first job is an entry-level position will later move into more complicated work and/or continue in their schooling.

Although employers may have to screen a number of applicants before accepting one, only a relatively small percentage say they suffer from a shortage of qualified candidates at the entry level (Crain, 1984). Moreover, while employers look for high school diplomas, they appear to be less interested in grades or competency than in previous work experience. For most entry-level work, employers want an employee competent in the basic skills; they generally do not seek the more advanced reading, thinking, and scientific skills called for in many of the reform commission reports (Gufstafson & Groves, 1977; McPartland, et al., 1983). In fact, work-related social skills and habits are as important to employers as the basic skills: workers should present themselves well; be enthusiastic, responsible, cooperative, disciplined, flexible, and willing to learn; and show a general understanding of the workplace and world of business (CED, 1985; Crain, 1984; McPartland, et al., 1983; Owens & Monthey, 1983). However, hiring workers with these latter abilities is more difficult than finding ones with the required core of academic skills (McPartland, et al., 1983).

Employee Application and Interview

Because in most communities around the nation the number of applicants for entry-level positions far exceeds the openings, employers of large numbers of entry-level workers tend to screen applicants through written applications. They enable employers to evaluate such skills as correctly following written directions, using correct spelling and grammar. Moreover, if the applicant indicates a work history, stability and reliability can be determined from former employers (Gordon, 1985).

Interviews are used subsequently to evaluate a candidate's ability to communicate (including the use of full and appropriate language), appearance, confidence, knowledge of the company, and desire to learn (Chatham, 1982).

Work-Related Social Skills and Habits

Employers focus on personal traits and social skills—qualities that the Committee for Economic Development has termed part of "the invisible curriculum" of the school (CED, 1985, p. 20). Thus, when schools tolerate absenteeism, truancy, tardiness, sloppy work, and misbehavior, they are not helping students establish necessary work habits.

Although employers seldom consider grades or test scores, which high schools prospective entry-level employees attend can be important because of the social attitudes and skills presumed to have been taught. And, though employers rarely take into consideration whether a white prospective employee has attended an "inner-city high school" or a "suburban high school with a good reputation," they do see black, particularly male, prospective employees from suburban (usually predominantly white) high schools as potentially more acceptable employees. Although these suburban high schools are not necessarily expected to have given black male students a superior education, they are assumed to be less likely to have inner-city gangs and more likely to have socialized the students to be "more comfortible around whites" (Crain, 1984).

A survey of managers, supervisors, and employers of entry-level personnel found the following work-related social skills and habits *most important* in entry-level employees (Hulsart & Bauman, 1983):

Communication Skills: giving clear oral instructions and explanations of activities and ideas; reporting accurately on what others have said; staying on the topic in job-related conversations; using appropriate vocabulary and grammar; and following the intent of oral directions and instructions. This is the area in which entry-level employees do best, although some do have difficulty following the intent of oral instructions and using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.

Interpersonal Skills: functioning cooperatively with individual co-workers and as a team member; adhering to company policies and regulations, and to honesty, health, and safety standards; cooperating with the business' customers; being open to new ideas and methods; seeking clarification of instructions when necessary; exercising patience and tolerance; accepting constructive criticism and supervision; exhibiting leadership; and understanding supervisory authority and worker responsibility. Workers have most difficulty asking for clarification of instructions and accepting constructive criticism from supervisors. Often employees also exhibit the contradictory problem of not taking sufficient initiative at the same time as inappropriately assuming responsibility.

Basic Academic Skills

Few employers are looking for much more academically than basic literacy, but they do want workers who are "quick learners" (McPartland, et al., 1983) and who have a "willingness to adapt and learn" (Junge, 1983). Nevertheless, employers often cite inadequacies in basic skills—including, writing, reading, listening, the ability to communicate, and mathematics—noting that these inadequacies appear as causes for poor worker morale and high turnover, or prohibit advancement (Center for Public Resources, 1982; Junge, 1983, Hulsart & Bauman, 1983; Chatham, 1982).

A survey of managers, supervisors, and employers of entry-level personnel found the following academic skills considered *most important* in entry-level employees (Hulsart & Bauman, 1983):

Reading Skills: reading for details and following written directions. The importance of speed increases as the employee advances. Entry-level employees have the most difficulty interpreting pictoral information and understanding ideas and concepts. This affects, for example, their reading of instructions; employees tend to ask other workers for help rather than reading an instruction manual. On-the-job reading is more detailed and technical than most reading offered in high school.

Mathematics Skills: doing basic calculations, estimating quantities and using numerical values from charts and tables; checking for accuracy. Young workers most often have difficulty calculating numerical values from charts; constructing records requiring calculations; and using fractions, decimals, and formulas.

Writing Skills: writing legibly and completing forms accurately; writing standard English; selecting, organizing, and relating ideas; and proofreading one's own writing. Employers are more critical of writing than any other area, asserting that young workers have difficulty with all these aspects of writing and are unconcerned about accuracy.

Problem-Solving/Reasoning Skills: determining work activities to be performed; recognizing and using appropriate procedures and resources in carrying out the work; conducting work activities in appropriate sequence; recognizing the effects of changing the quantity or quality of materials; collecting and organizing information; identifying possible alternative approaches to solutions; reviewing progress periodically to assure timely completion; evaluating for accuracy and completeness and correcting deficiencies; summarizing and drawing reasonable conclusions; delivering completed work to the appropriate destination on time; and devising better work methods. Employees have most difficulty identifying alternative approaches and summarizing and drawing conclusions.

Vocational Skills

Except in some specialized businesses, few employers prefer workers with specialized vocational training. Vocational education graduates are very proficient in the skills they are trained in, but have a hard time generalizing these skills to other tasks (Owens & Monthey, 1983).

According to the survey of managers, supervisors, and employers of entry level personnel, the following were the *most important* vocational skills for entry-level employees:

Manual/Perceptual Skills: constructing, fabricating or assembling materials; using job specific hand tools and other equipment; developing visual presentations; using keyboard skills; and operating job-specific power equipment. Entry-level employees are generally successful in these skills.

Conclusion

The skills outlined above are important, universally agreed upon by employers, and set a minimum standard for entry-level work applicants. While schools should certainly develop higher order academic skills in all students, they should also ensure that students learn all the basic social and academic skills needed for an entry-level job.

—Carol Ascher

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Digest

Hothousing Young Children: Implications for Early Childhood Policy and Practice

Tynette W. Hills

Young children are presently being subjected to accelerating standards for achievement. Their teachers are under pressure from parents and administrators to alter curriculum and instruction accordingly. This digest discusses the conflicts early childhood educators are experiencing and offers recommendations for action.

Recent proposals for educational reform have emphasized academic achievement and preparation for technological change. As a result, many parents and administrators are raising achievement standards for young children. Teachers are being pressured to alter curriculum and instruction, and young children are being hurried and "hothoused"—caused to acquire knowledge and skills earlier than is typical (Sigel, 1987). This digest discusses the effects of hothousing on early childhood programs, the conflicts early childhood educators experience regarding hothousing, and actions they can take to improve the situation.

Higher Standards for Young Children

The current pressure for young children to achieve comes from several sources. Parents pressure children for various reasons:

- —their own ambitions for achievement;
- —their own need for help with multiple responsibilities, especially if they are single;
- —anxiety about the uncertain, highly competitive futures children face.

There have also been broad changes in social values. Heightened expectations for young children may signal a change in the nation's view of children. For example, Americans may no longer see childhood as a unique period of development, requiring special nurturance (Winn, 1981); adult interests may have become paramount (Douvan, 1985).

Educational Reform

According to Katz (1987), when educational reform is applied to primary school and downward, the results are:

- —acceleration of formal academic instruction, for example, earlier introduction to reading and math, complete with texts and workbooks;
- —entry and placement tests for kindergarten and first grade;
- —standardized or other tests for promotion to first grade;
- —transitional or extra-year programs for children who cannot keep up.

Affluent children may receive an excess of "enrichment," such as special tutoring in the arts, and fast-paced educational programs. They may have to answer to high expectations for skills and knowledge. Children in low-income families also face more stringent standards in school and at the same time may have added family and community responsibilities. Such pressures may be harmful to the mental and physical welfare of children (Elkind, 1986) and deny them more fitting pursuits.

Impact on Early Childhood Educators

Those who advocate hothousing programs pay too little attention to theory and research. Complex developmental processes underlie concepts and skills used in primary and elementary education. Children must actively organize their knowledge, apply it to new events, and relate ideas about time, space, number, and persons. Accelerating young children forces them to rely on lower-level cognitive processes, for example, memorization and visual recognition of letters and numbers. This may stultify learning and damage self-esteem and confidence (Elkind, 1986; Sigel, 1987). Children must have time and suitable social and educational experiences to develop normally. It is short-sighted to trade human complexity and creativity for accelerated academic learning in early childhood (Minuchin, 1987). To do so is counterproductive for long-range educational goals.

Early childhood educators place high value on collaboration with parents. Thus it is especially distressing that much of the hothousing pressure comes from parents. Conflicts with parents over aspirations for children and expectations for programs threaten a traditional source of teachers' support. If children sense lack of agreement, their confidence in significant adults may be undermined.

Early childhood educators are particularly vulnerable to criticism. Society places a low value on their work. Other professionals lack understanding of what they do. Educators' programs are subject to administrative and parental interference. Educators tend to be isolated from one another and hampered in developing professional consensus on policy and practice. These circumstances weaken the professional influence of teachers and reduce their ability to resist pressures that may be harmful to children and to defend appropriate programs.

What Teachers Can Do

The widespread emphasis on accelerated achievement for young children, and the simultaneous devaluation of children's personal and social development, present teachers with urgent responsibilities. Early childhood educators must renew their dedication to sound practice and increase their sensitivity to social and economic forces (Hills, 1987). They should work to:

- *Build respect for the unique needs of young children.* Young children need protection and nurturance during a prolonged period of development.
- *Promote the best interests of all young children.* While some young children face demands for accelerated achievement, others face early semi-adult responsibility due to the absence of family or community support. Systems of child care and early education in our country must respond to the developmental needs of all young children (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1986).
- *Gain support from other child development and early childhood professionals.* Early childhood educators should conceptualize their work as part of a comprehensive system of care-giving and education that provides support for growth-enhancing environments.
- *Enlist parents in promoting appropriate programs.* Teachers must take special pains to work closely with parents, and to emphasize the importance of experiential learning, play and social experience while doing so. In close cooperation, parents and teachers are more likely to provide what children need for optimum development and learning.
- *Gain a voice in decisions about curriculum and instruction.* Early childhood educators are equipped by training and experience to recommend the most appropriate educational experiences. They must participate in making decisions about educational programs, balancing broad traditional goals of comprehensive child development with emerging needs. They must also articulate to parents and others the place of early education in the long process of children's growth.

Conclusions

To prevent inappropriate practices and advocate for appropriate practices, teachers should:

- be aware of reasons why parents and administrators urge acceleration;
- become effective spokespersons for sound policies and practices;
- ally themselves with other parents, teachers, and administrators who are committed to practices that best serve the long-term interests of children.

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How Can We Teach Critical Thinking?

Kathryn S. Carr

The need to teach higher order thinking skills is not a recent one. Education pundits have called for renewed interest in problem-solving for years. As far back as 1967, Raths, Jonas, Rothstein and Wassermann (1967) decried the lack of emphasis on thinking in the schools. They noted that "...memorization, drill, homework, the three Rs [and the] quiet classroom" were rewarded, while "...inquiry, reflection [and] the consideration of alternatives [were] frowned upon."

That students are lagging in problem-solving and thinking skills is apparent at all levels of education. However, critical thinking courses and texts, in particular, may result in fragmentation of thinking skills. Thinking cannot be divorced from content; in fact, thinking is a way of learning content (Raths and others, 1967). In every course, and especially in content subjects, students should be taught to think logically, analyze and compare, question and evaluate. Skills taught in isolation do little more than prepare students for tests of isolated skills (Spache & Spache, 1986). The same criticism may be made with regard to commercial thinking skills materials. However, when such materials are integrated with content, they may become effective tools for attacking real issues.

Implications for Teaching

At each educational level, thinking must be practiced in each content field. This means hard work for the teacher. It's much easier to teach students to memorize facts and then assess them with multiple-choice tests. In a course that emphasizes thinking, objectives must include application and analysis, divergent thinking, and opportunities to organize ideas and support value judgments. When more teachers recognize that the facts they teach today will be replaced by the discoveries of tomorrow, the content-versus-process controversy may be resolved (Gallagher, 1975). As McMillen (1986) noted, "It really boils down to whether teachers are creating an environment that stimulates critical inquiry."

The following is a review of various types of thinking skills activities applied to content areas. While different disciplines frequently require different types of thinking, some techniques are effective across disciplines.

Critical Reading

The topic of teaching students to think while reading—critical reading—should be central to any discussion of thinking skills, in part because the reading of textbooks plays such a prominent role in the content fields. Critical reading has been defined as learning to evaluate, draw inferences and arrive at conclusions based on the evidence (Zintz and Maggart, 1984).

One method that promotes critical reading involves the use of news media in the class. Newspapers, magazines, television, and radio can motivate students to develop critical listening and reading skills. Differing accounts and editorials can be compared as a way of helping students read with a questioning attitude. Students can construct their own arguments for discussion or publication in student newspapers. In the process, they become more discriminating consumers of news media, advertising, and entertainment.

Children's literature is another powerful tool for teaching thinking. Somers and Worthington (1979) noted that "...literature offers children more opportunities than any other area of the curriculum to consider ideas, values, and ethical questions." Furthermore, literature that inspires and challenges helps students learn how to engage and interact with a book.

Writing to Learn

In keeping with the current emphasis on writing across the curriculum, composition and rhetoric scholars stress the teaching of thinking through writing. Elbow (1983) has presented a two-step writing process called first-order and second-order thinking. For first-order thinking, he recommends freewriting—an unplanned, free-association type of heuristic writing designed to help students discover what they think about a topic. The freewriting technique produces conceptual insights. Elbow asked students to write a few incidents that came to mind without careful thinking. This resulted in more intuitive, creative thinking. Elbow cautions that the reflective scrutiny of second-order thinking is a necessary follow-up of freewriting. In this stage, the writer examines inferences and prejudices and strives for logic and control.

Classification Games

Classification plays a significant role in the development of logical thinking and abstract concepts from early childhood to adulthood. Classification skill is integral to vocabulary-concept development and, therefore, to reading and retention of information (Gerhard, 1975). For example, young children group concrete objects or pictures in their efforts to form abstract concepts such as "vegetables," "vehicles" or "wild animals" (Gerhard, 1975).

All classification tasks require the identification of attributes and sorting into categories according to some rule (Furth and Wachs, 1974). While the sorting of concrete objects is an appropriate activity for the young child, verbal analogies (e.g., "How are a diamond and an egg alike?") are appropriate for a learner of any age. A number of commercial materials contain verbal analogies, logic puzzles, figural and symbolic problem-solving, and attribute games. However, application to a wide variety of environmental objects must follow (Furth and Wachs). Integration of classification activities into content areas is crucial to their value. Applications to mathematics and science, especially the inquiry approach to science, are readily apparent.

What may not be obvious are the applications of classification to reading in the content fields (for example, social studies) and the retention of information read. Schema theory holds that information, if it is to be retained, must be categorized with something already stored in memory (Tonjes and Zintz, 1987). Brainstorming techniques that aid comprehension are recommended to help students access their prior knowledge about a topic to be read, and thus classify and retain the new information.

Devine (1986) pointed out that it may be necessary to restructure students' schemata when prior experiences that are limited to a different context interfere with gaining a new concept. Devine used the example of students who were having difficulty seeing relationships between the concepts of social class and caste system. In a word association task, the students were asked to list everything they knew about each term separately. Then they were asked to find similarities—for example, classify related facts and events, identify the common thread among them, and label them—thus forming new concepts or schemata.

Conclusion

The urgent need to teach thinking skills at all levels of education continues. But we should not rely on special courses and texts to do the job. Instead, every teacher should create an atmosphere where students are encouraged to read deeply, question, engage in divergent thinking, look for relationships among ideas, and grapple with real life issues.

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IMPLEMENTING *INFORMATION POWER*

by Judith K. Meyers

Introduction

Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs, published jointly by the American Library Association (ALA) and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) in 1988, is the most recent in a series of efforts to articulate and encode professional program and practice standards which has spanned the twentieth century. Begun in 1983 by a joint writing committee of the AECT and the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), *Information Power* focuses on the building level library media specialist's role in planning and providing leadership in the establishment of partnerships for the delivery of resources and services. Resources and services vary according to the goals and objectives of the school. Physical and intellectual access to information, increasingly through networks extending well beyond the school, is the central unifying concept of the guidelines.

Levels of Implementation

There are several levels on which the new guidelines for school library media programs can be implemented: (1) national, (2) state, (3) regional, (4) district, (5) building, and (6) personal.

Activities planned at the *national* level have included two nationwide teleconferences, several receptions, an ALA pre-conference, the AASL President's Program, four implementation workshops, an AECT Pre-Conference Workshop, and a speakers' bureau. In addition, buttons, magazine articles, a newsletter, a discussion guide, a planning guide, transparency masters, a public relations guide, a checklist, a compilation of national, regional, state and local guidelines, a brochure, a personal professional development plan, and lobbying suggestions have been produced.

Similar activities may be adapted and conducted at the *state* level. Each state has been urged to name a coordinator and develop a state plan for carrying out implementation activities. A rich variety of projects is being undertaken among the states.

Regional level implementation has several definitions. Primarily, it means those activities conducted by the regional media centers within the various states. However, it may mean activities conducted with the purpose of influencing regional accrediting associations, such as the North Central Association and the Southern Association. It also means activities conducted by the regions of the American Association of School Librarians and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology. Each of these regions is a viable arena for guidelines implementation activities.

Plans for implementation of the guidelines at the *district* level are those made by the library media specialist(s) serving in districts where there is more than one school. They may be led by the district director where one is available or they may be the unified efforts of all the specialists working in a given district under a designated or elected chair.

At the *building* level, implementation plans are compatible with district level plans, but they may differ from them in any number of aspects according to the different goals, objectives, and priorities which govern the scope and direction of the building level program.

Finally, each specialist should have a commitment to *personal* professional growth and development derived from the new guidelines. One should continuously strive to be in position, prepared to undertake implementation and program development activities whenever the opportunity presents itself. A checklist for personal professional development has been designed to assist individual library media specialists in these efforts.

The Implementation Cycle

Implementation is a cyclical activity, renewing itself again and again in an ongoing quest for educational excellence. The implementation cycle presented here is a standard one which can be applied at any level of implementation planning. It comprises eight steps: (1) analyze organization, (2) gather data, (3) set goals, (4) establish priorities, (5) develop plans, (6) take action, (7) evaluate effectiveness, and (8) revise plans.

Organizational Analysis and Political Culture

The effectiveness of *organizational analysis* can be increased if the prevailing political culture is taken into account. There are a number of research-based analysis techniques that can aid the implementation process in this regard. In their work supported by a grant from the National Institute of Education (NIE-G-83-0138), researchers Frederick Wirt, Douglas E. Mitchell, and Catherine Marshall applied the ideas expressed by Daniel Elazar in *American Federalism: A View from the States* (1966), and later explored in depth in his *Cities of the Prairie* (1970), in which he identified three distinctive types of political culture:

1. **Traditionalist Political Culture** (TPC): Government's main function is maintaining traditional patterns, being responsive to a governing elite, with partisanship subordinated to personal ties.
2. **Individualistic Political Culture** (IPC): Government is a "marketplace" that responds to demands, favors economic development, and relies heavily on the political party as the vehicle for satisfying individuals' needs—hence a heavy emphasis on partisanship.
3. **Moralistic Political Culture** (MPC): Government is a means for achieving the good community, or "commonwealth," through positive action; non-governmental action is preferred but social and economic regulations are legitimate and sought, parties are downplayed, and bureaucracy is viewed positively as an agent of the people.

Wirt and the others surveyed the state education policy elite in six states representing each of the three political cultures (MPC: California, Wisconsin; IPC: Pennsylvania, Illinois; and TPC: Arizona, West Virginia). The policy elite were: a chairman and minority leader in the committees on education and education finance of both houses; the governor's chief education policy aide; a chief state school officer and staff aides responsible for seven state policy areas; lobbyists for teachers, superintendents, principals, and school boards; knowledgeable observers from academia; and a major newspaper. Through the survey, strong support was found for the existence of Elazar's political cultures among the education policy makers in the states.

The researchers then ranked the policy influentials in all six states as follows:

Influence	**Rank**	**Policy Group**
Insiders	1	Individual Member of the Legislature
	2	Legislators as a Whole
Near Circle	3	Chief State School Officer
	4	All Education Interest Groups Combined
	5	Teacher Organizations
	6	Governor and Executive Staff
	7	Legislative Staff
Far Circle	8	State Board of Education
	9	Others
Sometime Players	10	School Boards Association
	11	State Administrator Association
Other Forgotten Players	12	Courts
	13	Federal Policy Mandates
	14	Non-Educator Interest Groups
	15	Lay Groups
	16	Education Research Organizations
	17	Referenda
	18	Producers of Educational Materials

The schedule above combines all six states. When states were analyzed individually many differences appeared, confirming that state policy systems are quite complex. History, current crises, recent power shifts, and other elements contribute to many differences among the states.

The work of Wirt, Marshall, and Mitchell holds several implications for guidelines implementation:

1. The definitions of the political cultures can be used to identify the political cultures of other states through analytical methods or replication of the study.
2. Evidence of the political cultures can probably be found among district and building level policy makers.
3. Effective promotion of the school library media program should differ according to the political culture in which it is established:
   a. In a Traditional Political Culture, emphasis should be placed on preserving the fine tradition of the school library media program.
   b. In the Individualistic Political Culture, emphasis should be on the efficiencies and economies achieved by the school library media program.
   c. In the Moralistic Political Culture, emphasis should be placed on the popular support for the school library media program and the role it plays in providing information for community goal setting and program development.
4. The list of the policy elite may be applied in identifying the policy elite in each state.
5. The circle of influence may be applied to rank the policy influentials in each state, comparing it to the pattern for all six states as needed.
6. The circle of influence may be adapted for use in identifying policy influentials at the district and building levels.
7. The policy groups identified in the circle of influence may be targeted for activities to promote the implementation of school library media programs in each state.

The Remainder of the Implementation Cycle

In *gathering data* about one's organization, state statistical records are the best sources of comparison. *Information Power: Checklist for School Library Media Programs* and *Information Power: National, Regional, State, and Local Compilation*,* disseminated at the implementation workshops conducted by AECT in late summer 1988, should also be of assistance in identifying and assembling the kinds of data needed to promote the development of school library media services. Not all the guidelines are of equal importance. Not all *goals* can be accomplished immediately or even within a year.

Developing a system of *priorities* for achieving goals is highly recommended. Priorities can be translated easily into short-, medium-, and long-range plans.

A Planning Guide for Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs and *Information Power: Checklist for School Library Media Programs* include forms for the development of action *plans*. A good action plan will have a device to assist the planners in *evaluating* how successful they were in carrying out the plan. Application of the checklist a second time is another approach to evaluation. The compilation of state, regional, and national standards may also be used as an evaluation model. Finally the plan is *revised*.

Guidelines implementation is no mysterious process. It is a systematic undertaking, beginning with a carefully and clearly thought out plan, followed by patient and persistent pursuit of a selected set of achievable goals. As each goal is met, another takes its place and the cycle begins anew.

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* A number of publications supporting *Information Power: Guidelines for School Library Media Programs* were published by AASL and AECT in 1988.

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IMPROVING THE SCHOOL-HOME CONNECTION FOR LOW-INCOME URBAN PARENTS

The importance of a child's home, and parent participation in school activities, to learning is undisputed. Therefore, it is unfortunate that the poor achievement of low-income urban students has often coexisted with a perceived lack of parent interest in schooling, creating a tendency to lift the burden of these children's academic failure from the schools by blaming their parents' lack of involvement in education. In fact, conversely, low-income parents can and want to help with their children's schooling—both at home and at school. Thus, teachers and other school staff need reach out to parents in ways they can respond to, and help them help their children.

The Low-Income Urban Parent

Poverty weighs most heavily on urban children. Most of these poor urban children live in the growing number of single parent, female-headed households, where low wages and unemployment make life an increasing economic battle. Among blacks and Hispanics living in poor urban neighborhoods, the proportion of female-headed families is particularly high.

Even when a man is present in the household, families are increasingly comprised of children with more than one parental relationship. Since many mothers of school-age children are in the work force, not only stepmothers, but custodial mothers, and a variety of paid helpers, are all part of the complicated and imperfect patchwork of childcare.

School-Based Activities and Single and Working Parents

Research suggests that the more parents participate in schooling, in a sustained way, at every level—in advocacy, decision-making and oversight roles, as fundraisers and boosters, as volunteers and paraprofessionals, and as home teachers—the better for student achievement (Gordon, 1978). However, given the pressures of daily life on urban parents, a number of questions are raised about whether schools can engage poor, single, or working parents, who may be busier or have more troubled households than middle-class parents.

Understandably, educators, whose own time and resources are limited, are wary about expending insufficient effort in generating parent involvement. Yet, school personnel tend to decide in advance that single and working parents cannot be approached or relied on (Epstein, 1984, March). Though there may be a vast distance between parents' worry or concern and their actually reaching out, single working parents as well as dual working parent families are especially likely to want more contact and consultation with teachers, and they are as dissatisfied as the teachers about any loss of contact (The Metropolitan Life Survey, 1987).

In both dual working parent and single working parent families, parents' involvement in school activities is usually partly related to the flexibility of leave policies on their jobs. While most employers are still rigid about the time and hours they demand of their workers, they can be encouraged to allow flextime for working parents, and to extend short leaves beyond emergencies, so that parents can observe their children in the classroom or attend meetings (Espinosa, R., 1985). Where a corporation employs a large number of parents, times can actually be arranged with the employer for parent-teacher conferences and school meetings. These employer-school collaborations humanize the work place, increasing productivity along with employee morale as they make clear the employer's commitment to the next generation of workers.

Improving School-Based Participation

To generate better communication between schools and single and working parents, schools can be encouraged to move in a number of directions (Rich, 1985):

- be sensitive to parents' scheduling difficulties, and announce meetings and other events long enough in advance for parents to arrange for time off from work;
- create a more accepting environment for working and single parents, as well as those undergoing separation, divorce, or remarriage, or acting as a custodial parent;
- schedule teacher-parent-counselor evening meetings, with childcare;
- allow open-enrollment so that children can attend schools near parents' work places;
- provide before-school and after-school care;
- be careful about cancelling school at the last minute because of weather conditions, and leaving working parents with no resources for the care of their children;
- facilitate teen, single, working, and custodial parent peer support groups;
- provide both legal and custodial parents with regular information on their child's classroom activities, and any assistance they may need to become involved with the child's learning.

Home-Based Learning and Single and Working Parents

When parents' time for school involvement is limited, home-based learning is said to be one of the most efficient ways for parents to spend their time (Walbert, 1985). Nevertheless, teachers tend to favor parents who come to school, thus creating a cycle of positive reinforcement that leads to gains for those children whose parents come to school and shuts out parents (and their children) who are afraid or unable to do so (Toomey, 1986). Home-based learning breaks into this cycle and helps those who need help the most.

In fact, low-income single and working parents often *can* and *do* spend as much time helping their children at home as do middle-class parents with more education and leisure (Epstein, 1984, March). As with school-based involvement, it can be the teachers who hesitate to give these children work to take home, wrongly fearing that the parents will not be available to help. However, when teachers reach out to parents, these parents are generally more than willing to help. More impressive, when teachers *help parents to help their children*, these parents can be as effective with their children as those parents with more education and leisure, whom teachers expect to help their children (Epstein, 1984, April).

The Best Ways to Help Children at Home

Recent research on parental involvement in home learning differs about how the home and school should relate. While some researchers emphasize changing what goes on in the low-income or minority home in order to create learning situations that are more consistent with school learning (Walbert, 1984; Grau, Weinstein, & Walberg, 1983), others focus more on what can be done to increase teachers' understanding of the "natural" learning that goes on in any low-income home (Brice-Heath, 1983), or even to help these families help "empower" each other (Cochran, 1987). One author concludes that the "school-to-home pathway . . . is more likely to be effective if the two-way nature of the path is explicitly recognized by educators" (Cole & Griffin, 1987).

A first step in fostering home learning is letting parents know that there are simple, time-efficient ways to help their children. This can be done in a variety of ways (Rich, 1985):

- bilingual media campaign on the important role of the home in educating children;
- support for home learning from ministers and other respected leaders;
- family learning centers in schools, storefronts, and churches that offer help (bilingual, when necessary) to parents wanting to help their children learn;
- bilingual hot-lines for parents who need help in helping their children with their homework; and
- school-designed learning activities that parents and their children can do together.

Enhanced Schooling through Parent Involvement

Home-learning projects are critical for many low-income families who do not automatically give their children the assistance and stimulation necessary for success in school. Although both schools and parents must be inventive to increase parent involvement, it is important to keep in mind that every activity a child engages in can be enriching, and that the time children spend at home with their parents can be made as educational as the time they spend in school.

—**Carol Ascher**

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Executive Summary

ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report 4, 1986

Increasing Students' Learning

A Faculty Guide to Reducing Stress among Students

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The purpose of this report is to help college faculty increase students' learning by reducing stress among students. Because this report addresses the role of teachers and students, it is helpful first to explore the relationship between teaching and learning. The relationship between teacher and learner essentially poses problems of human relations. Teachers bring more than knowledge to the relationship; they are motivators, experts, judges. Teachers and learners share responsibility for learning, and some question whether "teaching" has occurred if no "learning" occurred.

Studies of teaching that produces the most learning suggest that "effective" teachers use an analytical and synthetic approach to the subject matter, organize the material well to make it clear, and establish rapport with their students. Most studies identify enthusiasm as important in promoting students' learning. The key seems to be to make college courses challenging but not threatening.

How Does Stress Affect Learning?

Many stress models emphasize a "mismatch" between the individual and his or her environment. Both too little and too much stress inhibit learning. Stress is difficult to define because individuals react to it very differently, and a situation that is stressful for one person may not be for another. Further, stressed individuals vary widely in the effectiveness of their coping.

Some college students, when stressed by academic demands, use ineffective mechanisms for coping: They may use "defensive avoidance", for example avoiding studying and putting off writing assignments. Teachers can help such students develop more effective mechanisms for coping through "stress inoculation" — managing their courses so that students have information about what to expect, giving feedback on their progress, and providing a degree of control over course activities.

What is the Value of Feedback and Control?

Feedback is information about current performance that can be used to improve future performance. When given properly, feedback can encourage positive stress that motivates students to action and can discourage the negative stress that inhibits action.

Teachers can take specific steps to give effective feedback: (1) helping students know where they stand, (2) setting up "learning loops," (3) providing written comments on students' work, (4) testing often enough, and (5) arranging personal meetings to discuss students' work.

Having a personal sense of control is an important factor in reducing stress. When students do not know what to expect in their courses, they feel out of control. Teachers can help students have a greater sense of control by using requests rather than commands, giving students choices in course requirements, explaining assignments so students know their purpose, involving students in the design of examinations, and soliciting and using feedback from students to improve courses and teaching.

College teachers who can effectively use feedback and control in their classroom create a climate ripe for learning. Students are relaxed but motivated to learn when they have an instructor who provides direction and feedback and who is willing to accept it in return.

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What is the Value of Interaction Between Faculty and Students?

Studies of college teaching support the view that the frequency and quality of teachers' contact with students, inside and outside the classroom, affect students' involvement in their own learning. Positive teacher-student relations have been linked to students' satisfaction with college, their educational aspirations, and their academic achievement. And when students perceive their teachers as partners in the educational process, they are more likely to take on new and difficult tasks.

To improve their relationships with students and enhance students' learning, teachers can provide structure at the onset of a course, encourage class participation, get to know students by name, mobilize student tutors and study groups, use appropriate humor and persona stories, be "professionally intimate," be accessible outside of class, develop advising skills, and be open to the role of mentor.

In general, students feel less stress and cope more effectively with stress if they feel they belong to the academic community. Faculty can play a key role in introducing and welcoming students to that community.

What Is the Value of Stress Awareness?

While teachers are not therapists, they can be helpful to stressed students. By demonstrating "friendly" attributes, teachers can become aware when students are stressed and help them cope more effectively. Specifically, they might help students with stress reactions, maximize the outcome of meetings with students, recognize severe stress that warrants referral to professional mental health counselors, and disclose their own thoughts and feelings about the course work.

The dropout rate between freshman year and expected graduation year may be as high as 50 percent. For many students, dropping out of school represents a personal loss and failure; for many students in school, ineffective coping contributes to clinical depression. Suicide is a tragic consequence that possibly could be avoided by greater self-awareness. While faculty are not responsible for the well-being of those they teach, college teachers can make an important difference.

What Can Students Do?

Professors should keep in mind that the goal is not to eliminate all stress but to help students develop a variety of skills to cope with the negative aspects of stress.

To assist students, faculty can recommend a number of strategies: (1) improving study habits, (2) managing time wisely, (3) learning positive self-talk, (4) learning how to relax, and (5) joining a student support group.

If students try strategies for coping and still experience the negative aspects of stress, then faculty should encourage students to seek professional counseling or therapy. This suggestion will more likely be received and acted upon if a good relationship between teacher and student already exists and if teachers are aware of what stress is.

Concluding Recommendations

The guiding principle of stress reduction is "stress inoculation," suggesting a preventive approach so that the negative aspects of stress can be avoided. Stress inoculation involves giving people realistic warnings, recommendations, and reassurances. Hence, this report has focused on the value of feedback, faculty-student relationships, and stress awareness.

Stress inoculation is associated with giving people information. Yet little research in the field of higher education describes how best to inform students about the challenges of higher learning. Research in the field of combat and health care demonstrate mixed results regarding the value of information. Thus, a need exists to identify the factors that influence the helpfulness of information in reducing stress.

More research is needed to identify the constructive side of professional intimacy, self-disclosure, and mentoring. Further research could determine why and how teacher-student relationships deteriorate and help faculty construct more successful relationships.

Further research is needed to describe the learning that occurs when one teaches another. Research at lower levels suggests that "to teach is to learn twice." Better understanding this phenomenon at the level of higher education could lead to new teaching strategies. And more research is clearly needed to understand stress among faculty.

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Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER PLAN MODELS

Why Do We Need Individualized Career Plans?

During the past several decades, most aspects of our society have become more and more complex. Technological advances, for example, have resulted in substantial changes in the nature and structure of occupations and industries. These changes have affected many of the ways in which we approach career planning and decision making. For example, new techniques in individual and group counseling, assessment procedures, and career resources increasingly are being used. Most important, career development is now being recognized as a lifelong process. Personal plans of action—individualized career *development* plans—are becoming important instruments that counselors and others are using to help their students and/or clients (both youth and adults) meet their changing goals, interests, and needs in this fast-paced, rapidly changing society.

According to Gysbers (1983), an individualized career plan (ICP) can be both a tool and a procedure that people either use by themselves or with others to implement and monitor their career development. As a tool, the plan provides a place to record aptitudes, interests, values, and competencies and to identify those they may wish to acquire or further develop; as a procedure, the plan provides a guide through which individuals use the past and the present to look to the future. Rather than a rigid track, a good plan can provide a renewed focus for one's life.

This **ERIC Digest** identifies the basic characteristics of an ICP, describes its conceptual and physical contents, and lists specific examples of its use. Finally, the career passport is examined as a form of ICP.

Essential Elements of an Individualized Career Plan

At least four basic characteristics of individualized career plans have been identified.

1. **Comprehensive.** An ICP is broad-based, with opportunities for individuals to define goals and identify competencies, aptitudes, interests, and values. Moreover, it is sufficiently broad to include such multilife roles as workers, consumers/citizens, learners, family members, and unique individuals.

2. **Developmental.** An ICP is ongoing; it is never completed. Indeed, it is designed to be used throughout the entire life span. Since it contains elements that respond to the demands of different roles and stages, it is not in a form that is completed only once. Rather, it is in a form that can be modified as new growth is experienced.

3. **Person-centered.** The plan belongs to the individual using it. Although the plan itself may be stored or kept for convenience as a part of an institution or agency, it remains the property of the person who has developed it. Moreover, although the plan may reflect the input of many persons (for example, teachers, counselors, agency staff, and business or industry personnel), it always remains person-centered and person-directed.

4. **Competency-based.** Each of these elements focuses on competencies, that is, on knowledge, skills, and attitudes individuals acquire at work, in school, on the job, or in the community. The plan, therefore, includes a component that identifies and records current competencies as well as a component that provides an indication of potential additional competencies to which an individual may aspire.

What Does an ICP Look Like?

Gysbers (1983) provided a logical structure on which to build. He suggested, for example, that the various life roles be used to provide the main section of a plan and that each plan contain a section in which individuals can project their future career growth. The latter section would provide the opportunity both to analyze and synthesize information and insights in the life role sections and to generalize them to present and future actions.

The remaining sections of the plan might focus on the activities involved in the individual's varied life roles. In addition, the plan contains a section generically titled "career growth development." This section provides room for analyzing, synthesizing, and applying information gathered in the life role sections. It also provides space in which an individual records his or her action steps and progress toward the completion of a goal.

According to Gysbers, the life roles include the following:

Worker roles. Individuals record information about the competencies they possess as workers or potential workers. Such a listing includes interest information and aptitude data as well as tasks performed around the home or schools or on jobs they have held.

Consumer/citizen roles. Individuals list the community resources that they have used and/or that are available for use. Depending on the age of the person involved, information is on such consumer/citizen concerns as the purchase and maintenance of housing, investment of money, and the like.

Learner roles. Individuals record their educational experiences and achievements. Official transcripts, acquired competencies, informal learning experiences, and extracurricular activities are examples of the type of information included.

Family member roles. Individuals record information about family background, family members or relatives, and possible family crises and what was done to handle them. Short anecdotes about such occurrences sometimes are included.

An individualized career plan also includes *career growth action* steps, that is, the design provides room for individuals to think about the information they have recorded along with potential next steps. This normally is the place where short-range and long-range goals are recorded and monitored, where behavioral "contracts" with oneself or others are kept, where possible barriers to goal completion are identified, and where supportive individuals or groups are noted.

Specific Examples of ICPs

The individualized career plan lends itself well to various formats and modifications; it can be targeted in many directions and it is adaptable for use at all levels of schooling as well as in employment and training agencies. Its flexibility is illustrated in

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the following brief sampler of plans and projects that have been developed over the past decade. Note the variations in target audiences, adaptability, and scope of the concept in the following examples:

- Childers (1983) developed a booklet for use in workshops on career decision making and planning as part of a series of three career orientation self-development units designed ultimately for use **at the junior high school level.**
- Wilson and his colleagues (1979) targeted their plan toward a specific area, namely, an allied health professions counseling model **at the secondary school level.**
- Hafer (1982) concentrated on creating a format for a career planning and development program suitable for use **at 2-year postsecondary institutions.**
- Smith, Berenson, and Smith (1981) developed a planning guide and handbook **for students with disabilities** that is available in Braille, large print, and tape cassette.
- Aanstad and Borders (1980) described a course, "Lifework Planning," designed **to help working women** evaluate their current job status and plan career changes commensurate with long-range life goals.
- Keller, Mayfield, and Piotrowski (1983) constructed **a 13-step approach** to career and life planning that includes such specific features of an ICP as developing a career personality profile, gathering specific labor market information, and preparing a resume.

Career Passport

Charner and Bhaerman (1986) discussed the concept of the "career passport" and explored how passports are used. The career passport is in effect a form of an individualized career development plan. The career passport presents a systematic process for developing an experience-based resume that documents nonwork as well as work experiences and details the skills, attitudes, and knowledge gained through these experiences. The process results in a formal document in which students or clients present the many marketable skills they have developed through their life experiences.

The steps for completing a career passport are (1) describe (work experience, hobbies, activities, home responsibilities), (2) translate (into skills, knowledge, attitudes, competencies, abilities, and interests), (3) present (in a career passport, experience report, or resume), and (4) use (for job applications and interviews, self-analysis, career exploration, counseling and advising, and education, career, and life planning). The feedback loop between (4) and (1) suggests that the process is continuous, with updating and modifications occurring regularly.

The explicit description of the nature of one's experiences and activities is critical and should reflect a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities an individual has had. It is equally critical to translate these experiences into their component competencies. The translation process requires users to explore their experiences deeply and to recognize the skills, attitudes, knowledge, and competencies they have earned. This process of exploration and recognition requires the assistance of a leader, who may be a teacher or counselor.

As a result, the users of a career passport discover that their experiences have taught them many things—for example, responsibility; ways to work cooperatively with others; specific skills such as recordkeeping, selling, handling money, and so on. They also recognize activities they enjoy doing (as well as ones they dislike), areas of interest they wish to explore, and attitudes they have developed. Furthermore, the process of translating experiences into skills, attitudes, and knowledge enables them to learn more about their marketability. Although some of the younger students may not have many years of experience, they learn that they do have much to offer.

Just as a passport for foreign travel allows a person to enter another country, the career passport enables individuals to enter employment or further education and training programs. In many ways, it is the key that opens doors, truly a passport to the future.

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ERIC DIGEST

INFORMATION SKILLS FOR AN INFORMATION SOCIETY: A REVIEW OF RESEARCH

This digest is based on **Information Skills for an Information Society: A Review of Research**, by Carol Collier Kuhlthau.

Living in an "information society" implies dealing with a barrage of information on a daily basis. Our success and survival depend upon our abilities to locate, analyze, and use information skillfully and appropriately. Yet, in recent years, reports have documented the "functional illiteracy" of many adults, who are unable to manage the information they need.

Internationally, educators have begun research and development of. means to increase information literacy. In schools, administrators, teachers, and library media specialists are working together to develop strategies that will enable school children to gain competence in using information. Library school media centers are key places where skills and resources are integrated to provide students with access to information about subjects across the curriculum. In addition, information technologies and information literacy programs have been developed for use in schools.

Public education's previously inadequate responses to the dynamic changes taking place in society were brought to national attention by the 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. As awareness increased of children's need to be able to manage information, several major developments in education occurred. These developments have been categorized as belonging to three groups: (1) acknowledgement of the need for a more integrated approach to curriculum development; (2) recognition that larger problems lie beyond the immediate one of providing students with basic computer literacy; and (3) adoption of a holistic approach to education centered around fundamental problem-solving techniques (Information and computing recommendations, 1986).

New Definitions of Literacy

A working definition of information literacy has been proposed by Martin Tessner: "Information literacy is the ability to effectively access and evaluate information for a given need" (Breivik, 1985, p. 723). Literacy thereby involves process skills which are applied for a particular purpose.

While related to library literacy, information literacy involves skills that are broader. Mancall, Aaron, and Walker provide a rationale for incorporating the development of critical thinking into library instruction: "Focus must go beyond location skills and 'correct answers' and move to strategies that will help students to develop insight and faculty in structuring successful approaches to solving information needs" (1986, p. 23). Library instruction that guides students through levels of information need in order to solve a problem or to shape a topic enables them to use information for learning.

In the information age, computer literacy, i.e., understanding what computer hardware and software can do, is an essential component of information literacy. Information literacy raises levels of awareness of the knowledge explosion and involves understanding how computers can help identify, access, and obtain data and documents needed for problem solving and decision making (Horton, 1983).

Information Skills

Recognition that computer literacy involves more than knowing how to operate and program a computer goes hand-in-hand with the recognition that library skills involve more than knowing where to locate information sources. Library resource centers have become laboratories for learning the essential components of an information system and for interpreting information. Skills requisite for information literacy have been characterized as follows:

- Integrating knowledge of tools and resources with skills (such as the ability to plan a research strategy or to evaluate information);
- Dependent upon acquisition of such attitudes as persistence, attention to detail, and a degree of skepticism or caution;
- Time- and labor-intensive;
- Need-driven; and
- Existing independently of, but relating to, literacy and computer literacy. (Breivik, 1985, p. 723)

Information skills prepare students to meet the particular demands of the information age. Problem solving, decision making, critical thinking, information gathering, and sense making are abilities related to information literacy. These skills must be taught, in addition to basic literacy and computer literacy, if students are to function in an information environment (Demo, 1986).

The Library Media Center as Information Center

Library media centers have evolved into school information centers in the information age. With the introduction of computerized circulation systems, collection databases, online database services such as DIALOG and Dow Jones, computer-assisted instruction, and word processing available to students, the library media center has become a natural place to learn and practice information skills.

Continual updating of facilities and maintaining of quality in staffing are necessary for the library media center to function successfully. A recent study of library media services in public schools which appeared on the U.S. Department of Education's 1986 list of exemplary schools found that a library media program seems to demand adequate staffing, even more than materials and equipment, in order to have the desired impact on education (Loertscher, Ho, and Bowie, 1987).

Integrating Information Skills with Curriculum

Information skills are the mutual responsibility of teachers and library media specialists, and must be infused into instruction across the curriculum (Irving, 1985). No longer can schooling be expected to provide students with all of the facts they will need throughout their lives. Students need to know how to identify a need for information; to locate, gather, and select relevant information; and to apply information to resolve an issue under question.

Resource-based, as opposed to textbook-based, learning uses the resources of the library media center to access information for classroom learning. Working cooperatively with teachers, library media specialists can recommend resources to be used in instruction, as well as identify appropriate points to infuse specific information skills.

Library media specialists also engage in collection mapping (Loertscher et al., 1987), an evaluation technique which determines how a given collection responds to units of instruction within the curriculum of the school, or with the everyday curricular activities of the classroom (Eisenberg, 1984). Mapping techniques are used to implement integrated instruction for gathering and evaluating information about the curriculum.

Teachers should be trained to be information conscious and to integrate the use of library media centers and information skills in the curriculum. Unesco offers guidelines for such training (Hall, 1986).

Cooperation between teachers and media specialists can result in an inquiry approach to research in schools. Students develop higher-order thinking skills through inquiry or problem solving, using such technological tools as online databases, CD-ROM (Compact Disc-Read Only Memory), and online public access catalogs (OPACs).

Information Literacy Programs in Action

Information literacy has become an international goal, and programs seeking its attainment are in progress across the world from Zimbabwe to the South Pacific.

In the United States, many states have centered such programs around the library media center, e.g., New York's Regent Action Plan, which requires that library and information skills be taught in grades 7 and 8 for the equivalent of one period of instruction per week (*New York Regent's*, 1985). The plan involves the integration of library instruction with classroom instruction. Other information literacy efforts are underway in Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota.

The American Federation of Information Processing Societies (AFIPS) has prepared a detailed curriculum to teach information skills to secondary school students. The goals of the curriculum include helping students to understand:

- The impact of information and technology on today's society;
- The importance of effective use of information, both to individuals and to society;
- Ways in which information is processed, obtained, and used; and
- Students' roles and responsibilities for living and working in an information age. (Information and computing recommendations, 1986, p. 160)

Conclusions

The information age requires of each of us a combination of technical skills and literacy abilities. Administrators, teachers, and library media specialists are joining forces to help students master information skills, thus enabling them to be competent information users in the future.

The implications of the findings cited here are obvious. Competent use of information can offer beneficial results to society at large; conversely, information illiteracy can cause real harm to individuals and to society.

Helping students to gain information literacy also means helping students to learn to think. Learning to question, to weigh alternatives, to interpret inferences, and to seek further data can only help individuals to cope with a continuously increasing wealth of information, and to survive in a world growing ever more complex.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Invitational Learning for Counseling and Development

Overview

Schools, like individuals, have "personalities"; these self-validating and self-reinforcing characteristics do much to shape students' experience of school and their attitudes toward learning. If the general tone of a school is hostile, mistrustful, or forbidding, students are likely to become alienated and discouraged, despite the best efforts of individual teachers and counselors. Conversely, if a school is cheerful, respectful, and inviting toward both students and parents, and if this inviting manner is manifest in every detail of instruction, program design, policy, staff behavior, and decor, students will likewise respond accordingly, and their experience of school will be rewarding and memorable. This is the basic idea behind the concept of Invitational Learning.

What Is Invitational Learning?

Invitational Learning is a remarkably direct but evocative model of schooling developed by William W. Purkey. The aim, as Purkey says, is to make school "the most inviting place in town" by emphasizing mutual respect and human potential in every aspect of schooling—people, places, policies, and programs. The invitational approach to education is predicated on four fundamental assumptions:

- that people are able, valuable, and responsible, and should be treated accordingly;
- that education should be a collaborative, cooperative activity, involving all participants—teachers, students, and parents—in all decisions which affect them;
- that people possess untapped potential in all aspects of human endeavor; and
- that human potential can best be realized by places, policies, and processes that are specifically designed to invite development, and by people who are intentionally inviting with themselves and others, personally and professionally.

Inviting schools, then, are places where students feel welcome, appreciated, and encouraged to realize their potential and to respect the unique worth of themselves and others.

Theoretical Foundations

The invitational approach to education derives from two theoretical perspectives: perceptual psychology and self-concept theory. The perceptual tradition sees behavior as a function of the individual's perceived world. Individuals are viewed as conscious agents who perceive, consider, interpret, and then act on the basis of their own experience, and who are ultimately responsible for their own actions.

Self-concept consists of each person's unique system of perceptions about the self in relation to one's environment. A person seeks to maintain a consistent self-concept by assimilating or rejecting perceptions that do or do not fit preconceptions, but a person's self-concept can change and develop as a result of inviting or encouraging acts.

If educators are to create inviting schools, they must identify those elements in the school environment that will interact with students' perceptions in ways that continually foster a healthy self-concept in students. Every part of the environment, the program and policies, and the approach to instruction must be designed to promote a sustaining belief in the value and unique potential of each person.

The Inviting School

The physical environment of a school can have a dramatic effect on the attitudes of counselors, teachers and students toward education and toward each other. If windows are broken, paint is peeling, hallways are littered, walls are covered with graffiti, classrooms dusty, and restrooms smelly, students can hardly be blamed for concluding that no one cares about them—and they will act accordingly. Conversely, if a school is tidy, well-maintained, brightly lit, and freshly painted, and if grass is mowed, bushes trimmed, flowers planted, and walkways clean, students are far more likely to feel a sense of pride in their school and in themselves.

Other ways to make your school building more inviting include signs and posters that welcome visitors and offer validating messages to students, bulletin boards that advertise school activities and events, and display cases that exhibit student accomplishments or artistic works.

Inviting School Policies and Programs

School policies—the rules, codes, and procedures used to regulate ongoing functions such as discipline, personnel selection, bus routes, attendance, and visitation procedures—can send a powerful message to people in the school and the community about whether or not people are seen as able, valuable, and responsible. Often, policies that may seem sensible and efficient to those who make them may be experienced as insensitive, degrading, or demoralizing by those effected.

Policies should therefore be framed with an eye not only toward the smooth and efficient functioning of the school, but also toward the convenience, self-respect, and dignity of teachers, counselors and students.

The academic program can likewise convey strong messages about a school's attitude toward students. Often, programs with good intentions are harmful to individuals because they focus on narrow goals and neglect human

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needs. For example, programs that group students according to ability may be highly beneficial for students labeled as "gifted," but this same labeling process may wreak long-term psychological damage on those who are stigmatized (and thus perceive themselves) as "slow." The invitational model requires educators to assess the effects of programmatic decisions on the human needs and self-esteem of everyone affected by those decisions.

Inviting Behavior in the Classroom

As Purkey notes, Invitational Learning is "as much an attitudinal disposition as a methodology." Teachers and counselors who accept the assumptions of the invitational model conduct all of their teaching and counseling activities and their relationships with the students on the basis of trust, respect, intentionality and optimism.

The Inviting School Counselor

According to Purkey, counselors can operate at four levels of inviting or disinviting:

- **Intentionally disinviting**—counselors who deliberately attempt to make students feel incapable, worthless, and irresponsible.
- **Unintentionally disinviting**—counselors who "have their hearts in the right place" but whose counseling methods contradict their good intentions by inadvertent discouraging messages conveyed through labeling or stereotyping, nonverbal signals, or other means.
- **Unintentionally inviting**—counselors who are "naturals," but who are unaware of the nature and good effects of their behavior. Because they do not see the sources of their successes and failures, such counselors are often blocked from professional development, and they often lack the consistent pattern of behavior middle school students need in order to formulate their own identities.
- **Intentionally inviting**—counselors who explicitly invite students, teachers, administrators, and parents and are able to adjust and evaluate their invitations as necessary. The goal of most counselors, of course, is to be intentionally inviting as much as possible. The intentionally inviting counselor makes a determined effort to make the school an inviting place that stresses the importance and uniqueness of students, encourages parental involvement in the school, and nurtures the creativity of teachers. The intentionally inviting counselor: listens with care, acts "real" with students, possesses self-understanding and self-acceptance, handles rejection well, and effectively manages stress.

The inviting school counselor also offers concrete humanistic behaviors to assist students to feel adequate as learners by nurturing the following skills in students: **relating** (with school, teachers, classmates, and the opposite sex), **asserting** (developing a sense of control over what happens in the classroom), **investing** (willingness to try new things, to explore new possibilities, and to make mistakes), and **coping** (meeting school expectations).

The counselor's role in the school can be viewed as the delivery of direct invitational services to students and staff and the humanizing of the school atmosphere. The counselor proceeds in such a manner that students, staff, and the counselor feel worthwhile, capable, and responsible.

Where Do We Start?

It is not always easy to transform a school into an inviting place that respects individuality, that nurtures curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and that fosters dignity and responsibility. Institutional bad habits can be as difficult to break as personal bad habits. But the process begins with individuals—with principals, teachers and counselors.

Principals can initiate the process of change by establishing a clear set of goals based on the invitational model. Next, a three-to-five year plan can be instituted to achieve these goals. Renovation of the physical plan should come first, since this establishes an appropriate setting for the transformations that follow—in policies, programs, and practices. Principals should also model the behavior they expect of teachers and counselors in their own interactions with staff and students.

The ultimate responsibility for the success of an invitational model, however, lies with teachers and counselors themselves. Purkey has developed a systematic plan he calls the "Four Corner Press" through which teachers and counselors can develop an inviting attitude that pervades everything they do. The four "corners" are as follows:

- being personally inviting with one's self
- being personally inviting with others
- being professionally inviting with one's self
- being professionally inviting with others

The underlying notion behind this approach is that to be successful, teachers and counselors must develop an authentically inviting attitude, toward themselves and others, both inside and outside of school. They should lead lively and interesting lives, be fully engaged both personally and professionally in their job, and support and encourage both students and colleagues in everything they do.

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INVOLVING AT-RISK FAMILIES IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

By Lynn Balster Liontos

"I never see the parents I need to see," more than one teacher has complained. These are the parents of children at risk—at risk of failing, of dropping out, of having what in today's world accounts to no future at all.

The benefits to children whose parents are involved in the educational process are well-known: substantial research links family involvement to both academic and social success of children at school. Of all youth, at-risk children, whose numbers are increasing, have the most to gain from parent involvement. Consequently, schools need to find ways to reach at-risk families.

Who Is at Risk?

Most children are "at risk" at some time or another. James Comer states that "given increasing divorce rates, the growing numbers of single parent families and families in which both parents work, and the general complexity of modern life, even children of well-educated, middle-class parents can come to school unprepared because of the stress their families are undergoing." (quoted by Lynn Olson 1990)

Certain children, however, are in critical need of social intervention. These are generally the children who have traditionally been termed "at-risk." They are usually poor minorities often from other cultural backgrounds.

Why Is Parent Involvement Especially Important for At-Risk Children?

The main reason parental involvement with the schools is so important for at-risk children is that their home and school worlds are so different. "The predictable consequence in such situations is that children usually embrace the familiar home culture and reject the unfamiliar school culture, including its academic components and goals," says Muriel Hamilton-Lee (1988).

Suzanne Ziegler (1987) suggests it may be particularly important for teachers to develop communication with parents of at-risk children so that both understand the others' settings and expectations which may alter both settings. That is, school can become more home-like and home can have a school component. Or, as Joyce Epstein (1987) points out, family-like schools make students feel part of a "school family," where they receive individual attention which improves motivation.

Why Haven't Schools Been Reaching At-Risk Parents?

Traditional methods of parental involvement do not work with at-risk parents. In addition, the history of relationships between poor and minority parents and schools has been very different than those of the middle class. Barriers and misperceptions that exist for both parents and schools include:

Parents. At-risk parents may have feelings of inadequacy, failure, and poor self-worth, as well as negative experience with schools. Other cultures, as well as many low-income parents in general, see schools as institutionalized authority and, therefore, leave it to the teachers to educate their children. Additionally, there are economic, emotional, and time constraints (some families are struggling just to survive) and logistical problems such as lack of child care, transportation, and scheduling conflicts. In cultural minority families, involving parents can be further complicated by language barriers.

Teachers and Schools. Teacher attitudes play a large part in the academic success of at-risk children. Teachers who have low expectations for at-risk children, or who believe that at-risk parents don't care about their children and don't want to be involved in their education may contribute to childrens' failure. Teachers also may feel uncertain about how to maintain their role as experts while still involving parents.

According to Diana T. Slaughter and Valerie Shahariw Kuehne (1988), schools tend to see the parental role as traditional and perhaps passive and home-based, whereas many parents are interested in more active roles. Schools are often guilty of not taking the initiative to ask parents for help, and of not welcoming their participation. Finally, schools often organize events for their own convenience and pay little attention to the needs of at-risk parents.

What Can Be Done about These Obstacles?

Schools should consider adopting new beliefs and premises, based largely on the work of Rhoda Becher (Ziegler), Don Davies (1989), and Jean Krasnow (1990):

1. Successful at-risk programs begin with the premise that it's not any single person's or group's fault that a child or group of children is not learning; nor is it the school's fault. We are all responsible and dependent on each other.

2. All families have strengths. Successful programs emphasize them and let parents know these strengths are valued. This also means it isn't helpful to view at-risk families as deficients or as failures.

3. Most parents really care about their children. Successful programs acknowledge and express this. Studies of poor and minority parents in Maryland, New England, and the Southwest, for instance, have found that parents care deeply about their children's education but may not know how to help. (M. Sandra Reeves 1988)

4. Parents can learn new techniques. Successful programs help parents identify what they're capable of doing and how to overcome obstacles. One way to do this is by teaching them new skills and behaviors, such as helping their children through home learning.

5. Cultural differences are both valid and valuable. Successful programs learn about other cultures and respect their

beliefs. They find ways of building on the loyalty and obedience, for example, that Hispanic parents instill in their children.

6. Many family forms exist and are legitimate. Successful programs involve stepparents or even grandparents, and provide family support where resources are limited.

7. All individuals and families need to feel empowered, especially at-risk families who often feel powerless and out of control. Successful programs ask parents what they'd be interested in doing and work with *their* agendas first. Some also train at-risk parents to be part of their school's decision-making groups.

8. Partnership with at-risk families is impossible without collaboration with other community agencies. Schools cannot provide all the services that at-risk families need, such as parenting education, counseling, health care, and housing. The school staff also needs to function in a collaborative way with each other for real change to occur.

How Do I Begin a Program for Working with At-Risk Families?

The Hispanic Policy Development Project's publication (Siobhan Nicolau and Carmen Lydia Ramos 1990) offers guidelines, based on successful projects, that are useful for most at-risk groups:

•Be sure you're totally committed; half-hearted attempts do not accomplish much. There must be active support by the principal and staff. All the Hispanic projects that lacked the support of teachers and principals failed to increase parent involvement.

•Assign a project coordinator—someone who understands the culture and background of the parents and is sincerely dedicated. Give the coordinator time to do the job. Nicolau and Ramos found that leadership was the single most important element in launching a successful program with Hispanic parents.

•Be prepared to be innovative and flexible. The Hispanic projects that failed were those where new techniques were not tried, or where things were done "the way we have always done it."

•Use strong, personal outreach. "The personal approach," say Nicolau and Ramos, "which means talking face to face with the parents, in their primary language, at their homes, or at the school...was the strategy deemed most effective by 98 percent of the project coordinators." Home visits are a must.

•Make your first event fun. Start with something social as an icebreaker. Not every event can be a party, and Nicolau and Ramos offer suggestions for how to sustain involvement once you've gotten it started.

•Do not hold your first activity at school. Events may be more successful on neutral turf such as neighborhood homes or community places.

•Pay attention to environment and format. Informal settings are less intimidating to low- income parents. Make them as participatory as possible. A warm, nonjudgmental atmosphere is mandatory.

•Prepare staff with in-service workshops so that everyone understands the community being served. Include everyone; you don't want a less than welcoming secretary to spoil all the work you've done.

•Do not view child care, transportation, interpreters, and meals as frills. Providing them will make a big difference for at-risk parents.

•Choose different times to schedule events. Do it with consideration for the parents' availability.

•Do not give up if the initial response isn't overwhelming. Under the best circumstances, it takes time.

"Keep up the effort," Nicolau and Ramos conclude, "and one day you will find that you can't keep the parents away."

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Involving Parents in the Education of Their Children

Patricia Clark Brown

When parents are involved in their children's education, both children and parents are likely to benefit. Researchers report that parent participation in their children's schooling frequently:

- enhances children's self-esteem
- improves children's academic achievement
- improves parent-child relationships
- helps parents develop positive attitudes towards school and a better understanding of the schooling process.

Despite these advantages, it is not always easy for parents to find time and energy to become involved or to coordinate with schedules for school events. For some parents, a visit to school is perceived as an uncomfortable experience, perhaps a holdover from their own school days. Others may have their hands full with a job and other children. The availability and cost of babysitters are other factors. Recently, teachers and other school staff have made special efforts to increase communication with parents and encourage involvement in children's learning experiences.

Ways to Involve Parents

One kind of parental involvement is school-based and includes participating in parent-teacher conferences and functions, and receiving and responding to written communications from the teacher. Parents can also serve as school volunteers for the library or lunchroom, or as classroom aides. In one survey, almost all teachers reported talking with children's parents—either in person, by phone, or on open school nights—and sending notices home (Becker & Epstein, 1982). These methods, along with requests for parents to review and sign homework, were most frequently used to involve parents.

Parents can participate in their children's schools by joining Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) or Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs) and getting involved in decision-making about the educational services their children receive. Almost all schools have a PTA or PTO, but often only a small number of parents are active in these groups.

Another kind of involvement is home-based and focuses on activities that parents can do with their children at home or on the teacher's visits to the child's home. However, few teachers involve parents through home-based activities, partly because of the amount of time involved in developing activities or visiting and partly because of the difficulty of coordinating parents' and teachers' schedules.

Ways to Reach Parents

Some programs aim to reach parents who do not usually participate in their children's education. Such programs provide flexible scheduling for school events and parent-teacher conferences, inform parents about what their children are learning, and help parents create a supportive environment for children's learning at home.

Many schools have responded to the needs of working parents by scheduling conferences in the evening as well as during the day, and by scheduling school events at different times of the day throughout the year.

It is important for teachers to keep the lines of communication open. This involves not only sending regular newsletters and notes, but also obtaining information from parents. Phone calls are a greatly under-used technique for keeping in touch. A teacher usually calls a parent to report a child's inappropriate behavior or academic failure. But teachers can use phone calls to let parents know about positive behavior and to get input. Parents justifiably become defensive if they think that every phone call will bring a bad report. If teachers accustom parents to receiving regular calls just for keeping in touch, it is easier to discuss problems when they occur.

Teachers need to consider families' lifestyles and cultural backgrounds when planning home activities. However, some activities can be adapted to almost any home situation. These are activities that parents or children engage in on a day-to-day basis. Teachers can encourage parents and children to do these activities together, and can focus on the opportunities that the activities provide for learning. For example, although television viewing is a pastime for most children and adults, they do not often watch shows together. Teachers can suggest appropiate programs and send home questions for families to discuss. This discussion can be carried over into class.

Busy parents can include children in such everyday activities as preparing a meal or grocery shopping. Teachers can also suggest that parents set aside a time each day to talk with their children about school. Parents may find this difficult if they have little idea of what occurs in school. Notes on what the children have been working on are helpful. Parents and children can discuss current events using teacher-provided questions. Teachers often suggest the activity of reading aloud to children. Reading to children is an important factor in increasing their interest and ability in reading. Teachers can also encourage children to read to parents. In areas where children may not have many books, schools can lend books, and teachers can provide questions for parents and children to discuss.

Home activities allow parents flexibility in scheduling, provide opportunities for parents and children to spend time together, and offer a relaxed setting. To be most beneficial home activities should be interesting and meaningful—not trivial tasks that parents and children have to "get through." When teachers plan home activities, they often think in terms of worksheets or homework that will reinforce skills learned in school. But parents often grow tired of the endless stream of papers to be checked and the time spent on "busywork." Another danger of promoting home activities is the possibility that there may arise an unclear distinction of roles, with teachers expecting parents to "teach" at home. Teachers and parents need to understand that their roles are different, and that their activities with children should be different.

Difficulties in Involving Parents

All teachers experience the frustration of trying to involve parents and getting little response. Teachers complain that parents do not come to conferences or school open houses, check homework, or answer notes. This leads some teachers to conclude that parents do not care about their children's education. While it is true that the emotional problems of a few parents may be so great as to prevent them from becoming involved with their children's education, most parents do care a great deal. This caring is not, however, always evidenced by parent attendance at school events. There are a number of reasons why these parents may not become involved, and teachers need to consider these before dismissing parents as uninterested.

For many parents, a major impediment to becoming involved is lack of time. Working parents are often unable to attend school events during the day. In addition, evenings are the only time these parents have to spend with their children, and they may choose to spend time with their family rather than attend meetings at school.

For many apparently uninvolved parents school was not a positive experience and they feel inadequate in a school setting. Parents may also feel uneasy if their cultural style or socioeconomic level differ from those of teachers (Greenberg, 1989). Some parents who are uninvolved in school may not understand the importance of parent involvement or may think they do not have the skills to be able to help. Even parents who are confident and willing to help may hesitate to become involved for fear of overstepping their bounds. It is the responsibility of teachers and administrators to encourage such parents to become involved.

Conclusion

The suggestions offered in this digest can help teachers involve parents who might not otherwise be involved. While it is possible for a teacher to implement such a parent involvement program alone, it is much easier if the school as a whole is committed to the program. Administrative staff can relieve some of the burden of implementing a comprehensive parent involvement program, and can offer help and support to teachers.

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HIGHLIGHTS ...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Issues and Trends in Career Planning and Placement

Global marketplace, corporate downsizing, leveraged buy-outs, demographic shifts, environmental scanning -- these are key terms for the modern day career planning and placement professional who must be in touch with them in order to effectively serve student and employer constituents.

Heading into the 1990s and beyond, the career planning profession faces several major issues and trends. Our nation's population is shifting and our economy has a decidedly global orientation. Computer technology is playing an increasingly pervasive role in career counseling. Career planning professionals are being asked to interpret employment trends, articulate the value of institutional education programs to student and employer audiences, and meet changing customer needs as never before. A discussion of five major issues and trends that are significantly affecting career planning professionals follows.

Changing Demographics

Key trends in our changing demographic picture that will involve career planning professionals include:

- A significantly smaller number of 18- to 24-year-old students than in years past.
- A growth of some racial minorities into majorities in many sections of the country. It is estimated that by the year 2000, our population will include 47 million Hispanics, 44 million Blacks, and 6 million Asian Americans. It has also been estimated that whites will be in the minority in 23 of 25 of the largest U.S. metropolitan areas.
- More than half of all jobs will be held by women.
- Significant numbers of people will be working part-time (Kauffman, 1988).

These demographic shifts will predictably bring with them significant changes in the needs of the employer and student constituents career planning professionals serve. The career planning professional will have to do more than merely extend traditional services to these clients; he/she will need to develop new services to meet their unique needs. Offering placement information in Spanish or Japanese and requiring career counselors to be bilingual cannot be far off.

The Increasing Role of Computers in Career Planning

While computers have been a part of the landscape of the collegiate career planning scene for many years, primarily in computerized guidance packages, the role that computer technology is playing has grown far beyond this narrow application. The need for a computer on every counselor's desk is clearly the order of the day.

Computer Networking. The advent of a personal computer and a modem allow career planning professionals to tap into employment opportunities for their students from around the nation. A firm based in Seattle, Washington has created a system named JOBLINK which enables employers to centralize their job information for college career offices. Employers can post job opportunities and company profiles which can be accessed through a personal computer and a modem (Sinnott, 1988).

The Federal Government's Office of Personnel Management has established a computer bulletin board listing job opportunities with the Federal Government. With a personal computer and a modem any career planning professional can access the system, download the information, and generate a comprehensive print-out of all available employment opportunities.

Career planning professionals in the cooperative education area have developed a similar national network, the system titled Cooperative Education Communications Network (CECONET), which already links hundreds of colleges and universities and employers for the common purpose of computer networking.

Database Applications. Colleges and universities across the country are using databases for the listing, storage, and retrieval of career information. Whether on a mainframe, mini-, or micro-computer, colleges are turning to database software systems to store and automate every aspect of their career planning operations. Student registration, employer job listings, scheduling campus interviews between students and employment recruiters, referral of student resumes to employers, credential files, and mailing list information for almost any purpose are all common database applications.

Desktop Publishing. Another major revolution computers have brought to career planning is the near typeset quality of documents that can be produced with a computer, a laser printer, and a desktop publishing software package. Career centers are now designing their own brochures, forms, stationary, and publications such as job vacancy bulletins, job hunting guides, and employment preparation handouts. Written communications of all sorts are being transformed through the use of this new technology (DeLoughry, 1987).

Desktop publishing technology has significantly affected the career planning profession due to the high quality of resumes that can be produced. Now for a fraction of the

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cost and with a speed and flexilbility never before available, students can prepare a resume that appears to be professionally typeset (Antonoff, 1986).

A New Orientation to International Employment

Experienced leaders in the career planning field are recognizing the impact that our global economy is having on collegiate employment programs. In a recent article John Shingleton, former Director of Placement Services at Michigan State University states:

> *In the world of employment, we are now dealing on a global basis rather than simply just a national basis. In order to meet the needs of the future, in terms of employment of college graduates, we've got to design a program that can speak to those needs* (Shingleton, 1987).

The international status of our economy requires that career planning professionals expand their counseling orientation beyond regional, state, and national boundaries. In 1987 and 1988 a career fair, organized by the Ministry of International Trade and Industry of Japan and Boston University, brought together Japanese and American firms operating in Japan with graduating college students from around the United States. The career fair drew students with Japanese language skills from colleges and universities all over the United States. These students had employment interviews with up to eighty companies. This is just one example of international career planning and placement programs that are beginning to evolve (Oishi, 1988).

Internationalism is a trend gaining momentum and must be taken seriously by career planning professionals. The world economy has touched the career planning profession. Today it is imperative that career planning professionals stay current with trends in international employment (Kauffman, 1988).

Video Tape Technology

Most colleges offer some form of videotaped "mock interview program" to assist students in refining their interviewing skills. However, the uses of video technology have grown far beyond this application. Most career planning centers now have a comprehensive videotape library. Libraries contain tapes on employer organizations to assist students in preparing for employment interviews, self-help tapes on job search strategy, resume and cover-letter writing, and interviewing techniques. Most students, having grown up with the television, are accustomed to acquiring new information through the televisio. Career planning professionals must be comfortable and well versed in the use of video equipment in order to design effective career planning programs.

Increased Emphasis on Marketing

Because we study, live, and work in a world where marketing is all around us, career planning professionals must possess the ability to effectively communicate how their services are of value to their users. Because the public is so accustomed to receiving promotional messages, they adopt the view that a service that is not promoted is probably not available. The consequences of ignoring this "marketing imperative" can mean the decline of a program (Walz, 1988).

Marketing can be an effective method to stay in touch with the changing needs of students and employers and allow career planning professionals to design and offer programs and services that meet user needs. This is especially significant in light of the nation's changing demographic picture, and our evolving national economic outlook. Mergers, down-sizing, and economic shifts are causing employers to reassess their human resources needs on a regular basis. A comprehensive view of marketing can allow career planning professionals to remain in touch with the changing needs of the employers and students they serve (Kotler & Fox ,1986).

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HIGHLIGHTS

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Issues in Multicultural Counseling

Overview

Traditionally, the United States has been defined as a melting pot in which various cultures are assimilated and blended as immigrants mold their beliefs and behavior to the dominant white culture. The melting pot image has given way to a more pluralistic ideal in which immigrants maintain their cultural identity while learning to function in the society. Not only are immigrants still flocking to America from Cuba, Haiti, Vietnam, Guatemala, El Salvador, and other countries (LaFromboise, 1985), but minorities already living in the United States have asserted their right to have equal access to counseling (Arcinega & Newlou, 1981). This diversity creates three major difficulties for multicultural counseling: the counselor's own culture, attitudes, and theoretical perspective; the client's culture; and the multiplicity of variables comprising an individual's identity (Pedersen, 1986).

The Counselor's Culture

A major assumption for culturally effective counseling and psychotherapy is that we can acknowledge our own basic tendencies, the ways we comprehend other cultures, and the limits our culture places on our comprehension. It is essential to understand our own cultural heritage and world view before we set about understanding and assisting other people (Ibrahim, 1985; Lauver, 1986). This understanding includes an awareness of one's own philosophies of life and capabilities, a recognition of different structures of reasoning, and an understanding of their effects on one's communication and helping style (Ibrahim, 1985). Lack of such understanding may hinder effective intervention (McKenzie, 1986).

Part of this self-awareness is the acknowledgment that the "counselor culture" has at its core a set of white cultural values and norms by which clients are judged (Katz, 1985; Lauver, 1986). This acculturation is simultaneously general, professional, and personal (Lauver, 1986). Underlying assumptions about a cultural group, personal stereotypes or racism, and traditional counseling approaches may all signal acquiescence to white culture. Identification of specific white cultural values and their influence on counseling will help to counter the effects of this framework (Katz,1985).

Adherence to a specific counseling theory or method may also limit the success of counseling. Many cultural groups do not share the values implied by the methods and thus do not share the counselor's expectations for the conduct or outcome of the counseling session. To counter these differences, effective counselors must investigate their clients' cultural background and be open to flexible definitions of "appropriate" or "correct" behavior (LaFromboise, 1985).

Another counseling barrier is language. Language differences may be perhaps the most important stumbling block to effective multicultural counseling and assessment (Romero, 1985). Language barriers impede the counseling process when clients cannot express the complexity of their thoughts and feelings or resist discussing affectively charged issues. Counselors, too, may become frustrated by their lack of bilingual ability. At the worst, language barriers may lead to misdiagnosis and inappropriate placement (Romero, 1985).

The Client's Culture

As counselors incorporate a greater awareness of their clients' culture into their theory and practice, they must realize that, historically, cultural differences have been viewed as deficits (Romero, 1985). Adherence to white cultural values has brought about a naive imposition of narrowly defined criteria for normality on culturally diverse people (Pedersen,1986). Multicultural counseling, however, seeks to rectifiy this imbalance by acknowledging cultural diversity, appreciating the value of the culture and using it to aid the client. Although the variety of cultures is vast, the following examples indicate the types of cultural issues and their effects on the counseling situation.

In the cultural value system of Chinese Americans, passivity rather than assertiveness is revered, quiescence rather than verbal articulation is a sign of wisdom, and self-effacement rather than confrontation is a model of refinement (Ching & Prosen, 1980). Since humility and modesty are so valued, it is difficult for counselors to draw out a response from a Chinese American in a group setting. The reticence which reinforces silence and withdrawal as appropriate ways of dealing with conflict may be interpreted as resistance by the uneducated counselor. Democratic counselors may also be uneasy with the role of the "all-knowing father" that the Chinese respect for authority bestows on them (Ching & Prosen,1980).

Africans place great value on the family, especially their children, who are seen as a gift from God, and on social relationships, with a great emphasis on the community and their place in it. In this context social conflict resolution becomes important, so that peace and equilibrium may be restored to the community, while personal conduct becomes secondary (McFadden & Gbekobov, 1984).

Many African values also influence contemporary American Black behavior, including the notion of unity, the survival of the group, oral tradition, extended kinship networks, self-concept, concept of time, and control of the environment.

In his discussion of counseling the Northern Natives of Canada, Darou (1987) notes that counseling is seen as cultural racism when it does not fit native values. These values are: cooperation, concreteness, lack of interference, respect for elders, the tendency to organize by space not time, and dealing with the land as an animate not inanimate object.

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Bernal and Flores-Ortiz (1982) point out that Latin cultures view the family as the primary source of support for its members. Any suggestion that the family is not fulfilling that obligation can bring shame, added stress, and an increased reluctance to seek professional services. Involving the family in treatment will most likely insure successful counseling outcomes with Latinos.

Individual Differences

There is always the danger of stereotyping clients and of confusing other influences, especially race and socioeconomic status, with cultural influences. The most obvious danger in counseling is to oversimplify the client's social system by emphasizing the most obvious aspects of their background (Pedersen, 1986). While universal categories are necessary to understand human experience, losing sight of specific individual factors would lead to ethical violations (Ibrahim, 1985). Individual clients are influenced by race, ethnicity, national origin, life stage, educational level, social class, and sex roles (Ibrahim, 1985). Counselors must view the identity and development of culturally diverse people in terms of multiple, interactive factors, rather than a strictly cultural framework (Romero, 1985). A pluralistic counselor considers all facets of the client's personal history, family history, and social and cultural orientation (Arcinega & Newlou, 1981).

One of the most important differences for multicultural counseling is the difference between race and culture. Differences exist among racial groups as well as within each group. Various ethnic identifications exist within each of the five racial groups. Some examples include: Asian/Island Pacific (Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese); Black (Cajun, Haitian, and Tanzanian); Hispanic (Cuban, Mexican, and Puerto Rican); Native American (Kiowa, Hopi, and Zuni); and White (British, Dutch, and German). Even though these ethnic groups may share the physical characteristics of race, they may not necessarily share the value and belief structures of a common culture (Katz, 1985). Counselors must be cautious in assuming, for instance, that all Blacks or all Asians have similar cultural backgrounds. McKenzie (1986) notes that West Indian American clients do not have the same cultural experience of Afro-American Blacks and are culturally different from other Black subculture groups. Counselors who can understand West Indian dialects and the accompanying nonverbal language are more likely to achieve positive outcomes with these clients.

Conclusion

Although it is impossible to change backgrounds, pluralistic counselors can avoid the problems of stereotyping and false expectations by examining their own values and norms, researching their clients' background, and finding counseling methods to suit the clients' needs. Counselors cannot adopt their clients' ethnicity or cultural heritage, but they can become more sensitive to these things and to their own and their clients' biases. Clinical sensitivity toward client expectation, attributions, values, roles, beliefs, and themes of coping and vulnerability is always necessary for effective outcomes (LaFromboise, 1985). Three questions which counselors might use in assessing their approach are as follows (Jereb, 1982): (1) Within what framework or context can I understand this client (assessment)? (2) Within what context do client and counselor determine what change in functioning is desirable (goal)? (3) What techniques can be used to effect the desired change (intervention)? Examination of their own assumptions, acceptance of the multiplicity of variables that constitute an individual's identity, and development of a client centered, balanced counseling method will aid the multicultural counselor in providing effective help.

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JOB-RELATED BASIC SKILLS

Once considered primarily a social issue, literacy has now become a business need. Changes in the nature of jobs and the composition of the work force are making workplace literacy programs a necessity. Although definitions of workplace literacy are much debated, many agree that the reading, writing, and analytical skills needed at work differ from those taught in schools or traditional literacy programs. The dimension of **context** is emerging: job-related basic skills are those skills needed to function successfully in the context of the workplace--in the performance of a job.

In light of the recent explosion of information on workplace literacy and basic skills, this ***Digest*** updates a previous edition (Thiel 1985) by defining job-related basic skills and reviewing the current consensus on their importance. Levels of job literacy, examples of programs, and recommendations about ways to make skill development programs work are discussed. Background information on workplace literacy may be found in related ERIC products (Imel 1988, 1989; ***Workplace Literacy Annotated Bibliography*** 1990).

What Are These Skills and Why Are They So Important?

The concept of job-related basic skills goes beyond mere reading and writing. Carnevale, Gainer, and Meltzer (1989) organize these "skills employers want" into seven groups or levels that build upon the skills of the previous level:

1. Learning to learn
2. Reading, writing, and computation
3. Oral communication and listening
4. Creative thinking and problem solving
5. Personal management (self-esteem, goal setting, motivation, personal/career development)
6. Group effectiveness (interpersonal skills, negotiation, teamwork)
7. Organizational effectiveness and leadership

The importance of workplace literacy has been underscored by the undeniable link between basic skills and productivity. Daily reading is now a requirement of almost every job. Many jobs now require higher levels of education, a trend that is expected to continue. Now being recognized is the connection between basic skills and competitiveness--of the United States in the global market, of businesses, and of individuals seeking to improve their employment status (***Bottom Line*** 1988).

However, as Sticht (1989) reports, "programs that offer basic skills training prior to and separate from vocational programs are not particularly effective in improving either basic skills or vocational knowledge" (p. 2298). The importance of "functional context" to basic skills training is illustrated by programs described in the next section.

Types of Basic Skills Problems and Solutions

Several levels of basic skills problems can be identified (Mikulecky 1989). First are extreme low-level literate persons, who need long-term intensive adult literacy programs, in which offerings range from basic functional survival skills to General Educational Development (GED) preparation. A second strand includes workers whose limited reading, math, computer, or study skills hinder their ability to benefit from technical training. An approach that integrates basic skills instruction with job training or upgrading can improve job performance for these workers. The third level involves job-specific literacy programs designed to relate to actual job tasks. The intent often is to prevent job-related literacy mistakes that affect safety, productivity, or promotability. Short-term basic skills instruction is aimed at accomplishing specific tasks and immediate goals, for example, map reading or preparation for a certified test (Askov et al. 1989).

North Carolina State University's adult basic education program is an example of the first approach (Rosenfeld 1987). Its objectives are basic literacy skills improvement and GED preparation for physical plant workers. The program offers (1) reading and writing for students reading below the fourth-grade level, (2) intermediate classes for fifth- to eighth-grade reading level, and (3) GED preparation classes. Students get released time for instruction in small groups, which focuses on using students' own experiences and resources that are job- and culturally relevant.

The second strand--improving the effectiveness of training through basic skills improvement--is illustrated by the Onan Corporation. The technical training required by a new automated production process revealed that many employees lacked basic reading and math skills. The resulting Manufacturing Education Program provides general skills courses in communication, computers, and math as prerequisites to the technical training (Business Council for Effective Literacy 1987).

Domino's Pizza provides an interesting example of the third level (BCEL 1988). In collaboration with a consulting firm, the company is developing interactive videodiscs intended to improve reading and math skills while teaching the specific task of making pizza dough. Simulations illustrate the effects of on-the-job mistakes without jeopardizing the employee or the work process. The videodiscs diagnose individual skill levels and select appropriate instruction.

What's to Be Done?

The following steps for developing programs to improve job-related basic skills are derived from Askov et al. 1989; ***Bottom Line*** 1988; BCEL 1987; Carnevale et al. 1989; and Drew and Mikulecky 1987.

The first step is **identifying the problem**. What goals or performance standards are not being met? What projected changes will affect basic skills needs? Clarify and define specific skill needs and relate them to the company's human resource development policies and to workers' personal goals. Specify projected results for the company and the employees. Needs can be identified by performing a literacy audit, in which information on the skills needed to perform job tasks is collected through observation, analysis of written job materials, and interviews with employees and supervisors. Drew and Mikulecky (1987) and ***Bottom Line*** (1988) give details on conducting a literacy audit.

The results of the audit and an assessment of the organizational climate, resources, and needs can be used in **preparing an action plan**. Management and union support should be obtained, and supervisors and employees should be involved in planning. Determine whether company resources enable an in-house program, or because few small businesses can afford such programs, whether a partnership with schools, colleges, community organizations, or consultants is warranted. Consortia of businesses or unions with like needs are another approach. Examples are the Consortium for Worker Literacy, which provides literacy classes for members of eight New York City unions, and GRASP Adult Learning Center, which contracts with Chicago small businesses to provide customized basic skills training (BCEL 1987).

The action plan should tie goals to incentives for participation (for example, paid release time, potential promotions). A secure, unthreatening environment provided for instruction, at the worksite if possible, should avoid associations with traditional schooling. The program should be presented as part of regular training, with a neutral name to minimize the stigma attached to illiteracy. Other considerations are whether the program will be open ended or of fixed duration; whether participation will be voluntary, mandatory, or referred; and whether costs will be borne by the employer, the employee on or off work time, or in combination. Many programs have continuous offerings or flexible scheduling to accommodate shift workers' hours. Increased numbers of women, minorities, and immigrants in the labor force mean that attention must be paid to such factors as child care and English as a second language in order to eliminate barriers to full and effective participation.

In **designing, developing, and implementing curriculum**, use eclectic, individualized techniques and organize content by job tasks, building on employees' job knowledge. Include problems and simulations of actual job situations, and use actual work materials as texts. Let employees work together and learn from each other. Avoid taking a "deficit" perspective; use experiences workers bring to learning. In teaching reading, include reading-to-do skills such as following directions as well as reading-to-learn skills that will help employees benefit from further training. Because on-the-job reading emphasizes reading only what is needed, teach sorting and prioritizing skills.

In considering the uses of instructional technology such as computers and interactive video, note that media can offer privacy, individualization, potential achievement gains, cost-effectiveness, and flexibility. However, technology is subject to change, involves some cost and expertise, and may not be appropriate for the level of instruction.

Considerations for **evaluating and monitoring the program** include having explicit measurement standards; using pre- and posttests based on results of the literacy audit; providing frequent feedback to employees and supervisors; measuring success by application of skills in job performance; and including observations of changes in work habits and attitudes as well as student reactions.

Each basic skills improvement program has unique characteristics, because of each company's culture, its specific literacy and training demands, its values and resources. Workplace literacy programs can improve worker self-esteem and job performance, company productivity, and the nation's competitiveness. In the current clamor over literacy, it should be recognized that much more is needed than just reading and writing, and much more is at stake.

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JOBS IN THE FUTURE

Information about future labor market needs is important to a variety of audiences, including vocational and career educators who use it as the basis for curriculum development and in helping individuals make career decisions. During the 1980s, a number of factors converged to affect the labor market. The most significant of these were the nation's loss of competitiveness in the world marketplace, continued shifts in production from goods to services, changes in the skill requirements of many jobs, and demographic shifts in the population. Changes in projected labor market needs in combination with the changing composition of the work force are providing new challenges for vocational and career educators. This ***ERIC Digest***, an update of Naylor (1985), provides information about jobs in the future including projections of future labor market needs, the educational implications of these projections, and the relationship between projected labor market needs and the changing work force. It concludes with some implications for vocational and career educators.

Future Labor Market Needs

Recent information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) (Kutscher 1989; Silvestri and Lukasiewicz 1989) indicates that many of the trends related to future labor market needs begun in the 1980s will continue to the end of the century. BLS projections include the following:

- The rapid growth of the service-producing sector and the decline in the share of employment devoted to the goods-producing industry will continue. For example, of the 18 million increase in jobs projected between 1988 and 2000, 16.6 million are expected to be in the services industries.
- Of the 20 occupations with the fastest projected growth rate, half are in the health occupations, with rapid growth also projected for occupations related to computer technology.
- Occupations that will have the largest numerical increase will include those in retail trade, health services, and educational services.
- An increase in the number of construction jobs will not offset a decline in manufacturing jobs so that there will be a continuing decline in the total share of employment in the goods-producing sector.

Educational Implications of the Changing Labor Market

According to BLS (ibid.), there are a number of education-related implications associated with these labor market projections. These implications, which also continue to reflect trends noted in the 1980s, include the following projections:

- Each of the three major occupational groups requiring the highest levels of educational attainment is projected to continue to grow more rapidly than the average for total employment through the end of the century. These groups are executive, administrative, and managerial occupations; professional specialty occupations; and technicians and related support occupations.
- Those occupational groups with the fewest educational requirements, for example, operators, fabricators, and laborers, will experience either slower growth or a decline.
- Despite the general rising trend in educational requirements associated with employment, there will still be many good jobs available in 2000 for individuals without a bachelor's degree. Examples of these include brick layers, stonemasons, electricians, plumbers, metalworkers, data processing repairers, electronic repairers, and mobile heavy equipment mechanics. Some of these jobs will require only a high school education, but most will require some postsecondary education and training.
- Although jobs will be available for those without a high school education, entry into the better paying jobs will continue to be severely limited for such workers.

According to Silvestri and Lukasiewicz (1989), "the future occupational structure is projected to provide jobs for workers at all educational levels, but persons with the most education and training will enjoy the best opportunities" (p. 42).

Labor Market Needs and the Changing Work Force

The jobs of the future are evolving gradually, following many of the patterns established during the past decade. Although a lot is written about new jobs and job titles, most workers will be doing the same jobs during the next decade. It is likely, however, that most jobs will have new aspects and require expanded skills.

On the other hand, the character of the labor force is changing at a much faster rate (Levitan 1988). Major changes in the work force of the future enumerated by Johnston and Packer (1987) include a shrinking pool of younger people available to enter the work force due to declining population growth and more women, minorities, and immigrants entering the work force. Some incompatibility exists between the jobs of the future and the changes projected to occur in the work force (Lightle [1989]). This incompatibility between the type of work available and the kind of labor force available to do it gives rise to several issues.

The first of these has been termed the "educational shortfall" and is related to the expectation that the most rapid job growth will be in occupations that require some postsecondary training and education. There may be an insufficient supply of individuals with the necessary education and training to fill these jobs. Furthermore, there may be a lack of persons with the educational background needed to qualify for the required postsecondary training (Kutscher 1989).

A second set of issues, related to the first, has to do with the growing number of minorities in the work force.

Minorities are currently underrepresented in the occupations projected to be growing the most rapidly and overrepresented in occupations that are projected to grow slowly or decline. There is additional cause for concern because the faster growing occupations require more education, and blacks and Hispanics have lower high school completion rates. Thus, they may not be qualified to enter postsecondary training. A continuing high unemployment rate for blacks and Hispanics and overrepresentation in declining occupations illustrates the poor use of these population groups in the labor force, which could have serious consequences in the future (ibid.).

The large number of women entering the labor force raises issues similar to those discussed for minority entrants. The creation of large numbers of jobs in the service sector will reinforce the low-wage, sex-segregated "pink collar ghetto" in which the majority of women work. Also, like minorities, women are underrepresented in those occupations projected to grow rapidly in the future and they are disproportionately enrolled in education and training that prepares them for low-wage jobs in traditional female occupations (Watson 1989).

A fourth set of issues is related to the area of job growth and decline. For example, rapid growth is projected within the health services, an area that includes occupations in which women have predominated. According to Kutscher (1989), "the issue that this projected growth raises is, can this job growth be achieved without a large increase in the number of men in some of these occupations, for example, nursing?" (p. 73). Declines in the goods-producing sector will likely lead to job displacement for some workers, many of whom may not have the training and education needed for the available jobs. Fluctuations in job growth and decline need to be addressed through training and education programs that will ensure workers are prepared for the types of jobs that are in demand.

Implications

The issues related to the interface of the projected labor market with the work force of the future are interconnected. Because the education and training requirements of future jobs are increasing, there is concern that many who will be entering the labor force will not be prepared. Vocational and career educators need to think of these issues as interrelated, rather than separate, problems (ibid.). Strategies that they can use to address these issues as interrelated problems include the following:

- **Advocating that their programs play a larger role in dropout prevention.** A career-focused curriculum has been proposed as one effective strategy for making instructional programs relevant to at-risk students and thus motivating them to remain in school.
- **Encouraging the further development of articulation models between secondary and postsecondary institutions.** Articulation between secondary and postsecondary institutions provides individuals a bridge into the type of technical education needed for the workplace of the future.
- **Emphasizing the importance of all students considering nontraditional occupational choices.** The changing composition of the work force in combination with changes in jobs means that vocational and career educators must continue their efforts to eliminate sex bias and stereotyping related to occupational decision making.
- **Continuing the development of programs that are accessible to all groups within the population.** Programs must accommodate a diversity of learners, including women, Hispanics, blacks, handicapped persons, limited-English-proficient individuals, and older adults.
- **Providing programs that include the development of basic skills as well as those that are occupationally specific.** Basic skills deficiencies can hinder job performance and limit an individual's ability to profit from further training.

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KEEPING TRACK OF AT RISK STUDENTS

Essential to evaluating a school's holding power, and increasing its ability to keep students until they are graduated, is determining how many students drop out, who they are, and why they leave. It is hoped, of course, that this information can both help identify and retain students still in school who are at risk of dropping out, and return those students who have already left. The reasons why students drop out, or even consider doing so, provide valuable insights which should inform dropout prevention efforts.

While it may appear that identification of dropouts is easy, in reality the definition of a "dropout" varies widely from school district to school district, and the mobility of students themselves often makes counting them accurately nearly impossible. Not only is it important for individual schools and school districts to have accurate dropout figures, but it is important for the figures to be based on the same set of criteria so that an accurate national dropout rate can be determined. In addition, uniform criteria would allow a comparison of dropout rates across the country and the effectiveness of the various state and local prevention programs. Those programs which best lower the dropout rate could then be replicated in other areas.

In the last year, two organizations, the Council of Chief State School Officers and the Council of Great City Schools, have attempted to define dropouts in a way that can be applied uniformly across the country.[1] The Urban Superintendents Network of the Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement subsequently expanded these definitions to produce a comprehensive checklist of characteristics and circumstances determining the status of students. The Network's list is presented below.

Who Is a Dropout?

The following core concept can be used by all school districts and states to define a dropout:

> A pupil who leaves school, for any reason except death, before graduation or completion of a program of studies and without transferring to another school or institution.[2]

Within this basic definition are various common categories of students, including any one or more of the following:

- those in grades 9 or 10 through 12 who leave during the school year and do not return within a specified length of time.
- those in a special education or other special, alternative, or ungraded program, who would otherwise be in at least grade 9, and who leave.
- those who do not return to school after a break or summer vacation.
- those who are runaways or whose whereabouts are otherwise unknown.

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- those who enter the military, a trade or business school, prison, or any other program not qualifying as an elementary/secondary school.
- those who are expelled.
- those who do not return after being suspended.
- those who leave for any of the above reasons and for whom no transfer is entered.

Who Is Not a Dropout?

Truants. Students who drop out before grade 7 or 9, usually under age 16, are considered truants.

Transferees. Some students leave school for reasons other than to drop out, often because they have found an alternative route to the education they want. The list below provides examples of some such students who should not be classified as dropouts:

- those who enter a Federal program, such as the Job Corps or Neighborhood Youth Corps.
- those who transfer to a nonpublic school.
- those who enroll in a program leading to a high school equivalency diploma (General Equivalency Diploma, GED).
- those who transfer to a State-approved program that continues the student's education on a fulltime basis, such as home-based instruction.
- those who enter an alternative educational program, such as a non-GED night school or a vocational program.
- those who leave school for early admission to college.
- those who enter a correctional institution at an age (under 18) when returning to school seems probable.
- those known to transfer, through transcript request or other information, to any of the above-mentioned programs.

Returnees. Other students who are sometimes erroneously identified as dropouts are those who take one or more "breaks" from the school they attend. Among those students are the following:

- those absent from school for lengthy, albeit temporary periods, because of illness, family travel, suspensions, etc.
- those who reenter after previously dropping out.

Leaver-Completers. Finally, there are students who leave school without immediately enrolling in another educational program but who do so later. Eventually they earn a high school diploma, GED, or other certificate of completion outside the public or private secondary school system.[3] These students, among the categories of students who do not take a direct route to education completion, are most likely to be mislabeled as dropouts, since the time lapse between their leaving a traditional school and entering another educational program can be lengthy. There is some thought, however, that students with a GED should nevertheless be classified as dropouts, for such a diploma is not as valuable to their careers as is a regular high school diploma.[4]

Counting Dropouts

If determining who is a dropout is difficult, calculating the dropout rate can be an even harder task because no system based on student *numbers*—as most systems in large school districts are—counted at a particular point in time, can correctly reflect the status of every student, present or absent.[5] Moreover, it is the ability of a staff member who is inputting data to accurately evaluate every student's status in the face of a great volume of information that ultimately determines the quality of a dropout analysis.

While the basis for all dropout rates is the difference between the number of students enrolled at two different points in time, the points chosen by schools vary widely:

- September and September.
- September and June.
- November and June.
- the beginning term of the school's lowest grade level and that class' normal graduation date.

Some schools have a counting system that takes into account students who leave school but should not be classified as dropouts (see list above), while other schools simply do not have the resources for maintaining such a system. Among the students who are sometimes erroneously counted as dropouts are these:

- those, described above, who take an extended leave which coincides with the time students are tallied.
- those, also described above, who complete an adult education program long after leaving school.
- those transferees whose new school does not request a transcript or otherwise notify the student's former school of the transfer.
- those who move so frequently that a transfer of records from former school to new ones is usually impossible.
- those who take longer than is normal to complete school, and thus fail to show up on the tally of graduates that is matched with the number of students who enrolled the usual number of years earlier.

Conversely, students who drop out between school years may fail to be counted if their school's dropout rate is based on comparison of enrollment in the fall and at the end of the spring term.

The calculation of the national dropout rate is based on data supplied by all the school districts, whose criteria for classifying dropouts differ widely, as was demonstrated above. Thus, not only is there a decent-sized margin of error in the national figure, but comparisons between districts can be misleading, since each may have used a different measurement method.

Identifying At Risk Students

Often it is found that students who eventually dropped out began having problems from almost the beginning of their school careers. This information—startling, perhaps—has warranted monitoring students from the time they enter kindergarten, and immediately offering special programs to those demonstrating cognitive and social difficulties. Even earlier monitoring has also proved to be effective; special preschool programs have been shown to lower later incidences of delinquency, pregnancy, and dropping out, particularly for poor and minority children.[6]

Serious academic problems may appear as early as third grade,[7] and it is not uncommon for middle school children, particularly Hispanics, to leave school long before the onset of most traditional high school dropout prevention programs. Some school districts have responded with special programs. For example, in Kansas City, MO, incoming seventh grade students with poor attendance records are placed in Student Support Groups that meet weekly with school staff and community members for extra encouragement. An even earlier intervention program is in place in Dade County, FL; a Transitional Skills Class for students in grades 1 through 6 offers a high concentration of instruction in their deficient areas by a teacher and aide team. In its first year of operation, 85 percent of the program students improved their basic skills.

Moving on to the ninth grade is particularly difficult for at risk students.[8] At a critical state of adolescence, they must face a new, large, and impersonal school, new teachers each hour, many difficult required courses, and the loss of seniority they had enjoyed the previous year. To offset these problems for at risk students, schools can shift some required courses to later years, assign to incoming students more experienced teachers who will be sensitive to their needs, work with parent groups to help ease the transition, and provide extra counseling services. In addition, as is done in New York City, at risk students can be kept together for several periods a day so they can develop a sense of community with each other.

Monitoring At Risk Students

Crucial to both initially identifying at risk students and ensuring their progress as they proceed through school, either in the regular or a special program, is ongoing monitoring of their performance. (A beneficial byproduct of such monitoring is the ability to evaluate staff effectiveness with these students.)

Attendance. The most basic monitoring is simply keeping attendance records, a procedure that computers have greatly simplified. Since poor attendance often foreshadows dropping out, at the first sign of excessive absenteeism the school can offer a student personal attention. For example, the San Francisco Unified School District uses a home calling system to contact parents whose children have been absent for five days. In Philadelphia, parents of truants receive a recorded phone message, in both English and Spanish in appropriate districts. Schools also offer students various incentives for good attendance records, thus preventing rather than correcting a truancy problem. In Houston, tickets to Astro World and theatre passes are effective rewards.

Testing. Use of new, sensitive testing devices and technology permits early identification of students' learning strengths and problems and quick application of appropriate interventions. Subsequent testing, on a regular basis, allows for easy measurement of academic progress. In Minneapolis, for example, each spring students take locally-developed criterion-referenced benchmark tests. In addition, a computerized instructional management system provides ongoing monitoring of individual progress, allowing teachers to regroup students and select supplementary learning materials as necessary.

Educational History. Keeping track of at risk students can be a much more sophisticated procedure than simply monitoring attendance or testing regularly. While measures must be taken to protect students' privacy, schools can record a student's complete educational history, making possible the development of a personalized program based on past participation and progress in special programs. Moreover, these comprehensive student histories can be transferred to new schools so they can enroll transfer students in the most appropriate courses. Since frequent transferees are more likely to drop out than are stable students, efforts to limit the upheaval caused by transfers can be effective dropout prevention measures.

The Need for Accurate Dropout Records

It is necessary to accept and apply a uniform method of both defining dropouts and determining the dropout rate. There also need to be effective systems for identifying at risk students and providing them with the help they need to remain and succeed in school. Only then will it be possible to measure accurately national educational progress and ensure that all students are provided with the next opportunities to remain and succeed in school.

—Carol Ascher and
Wendy Schwartz

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Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

LABOR MARKET INFORMATION AND CAREER DECISION MAKING

Accurate information about occupational opportunities is one of the essential ingredients of sound career decision making. Teachers and counselors both play an influential role in helping youth and adults gather, analyze, and use this information. One important source of occupational information is the labor market. Following a definition of labor market information (LMI), this **ERIC Digest** highlights some sources of LMI, describes major LMI classification systems, suggests some criteria for selecting LMI, and lists sources for career decision making.

What Is Labor Market Information?

The labor market is the interaction of individuals competing for jobs (occupations) and employers (industries) competing for workers, usually in a particular geographic area. Although for some occupations there is a national labor market, for most the applicable labor market area is local. Because it is affected by both economic and human factors, any labor market is in a constant state of flux (Kimmel-Boyle and Wheldon 1986).

Labor market information (LMI) is the description of the interaction between occupations and employers. It is information that describes and interprets how a labor market is functioning, and identifies available labor resources and employment opportunities. Three major components make up LMI: economic or labor force information (the number of people employed and unemployed), occupational information (descriptions of occupations), and demographic information (characteristics of the general population related to employment and workers) (Iowa Occupational Information Coordinating Committee 1985). Although more and better LMI will not in itself solve career decision-making problems of youth and adults, it is important to understand how to use it in career decision making.

Sources of Labor Market Information

Labor market information is compiled by a variety of agencies, among them divisions of the U.S. Department of Labor; the Departments of Commerce, Defense, and Education; and state employment security agencies. One guide through this maze of information is the network of the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) and the State Occupational Information Coordinating Committees (SOICCs). This network supports the development of statewide Career Information Delivery Systems (CIDS) that are now available in 47 states. The Association of Computer-Based Systems for Career Information in Eugene, Oregon, publishes a directory of state-based CIDS (McKinlay 1988). Increasingly microcomputer based, CIDS help match the interests, abilities, educational goals, and experience of users at all levels with compatible job/career possibilities. They generally provide national and state information (and local when possible) on occupations, education and training programs, and apprenticeships. Greater flexibility and access are becoming possible as technology advances; innovative audiovisual enhancements and the increased storage capacity of compact disks are improving the information base and the delivery system.

LMI Classification Systems

Using LMI effectively requires understanding how the information is organized. Following are the three most common types of classification and the major federal publications that use them (NOICC 1986):

o **By occupation--**
  --**Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT)** contains detailed definitions of occupations, including titles, description of tasks performed, and related occupations. Because the most recent edition was published in 1977 (supplemented in 1982), some information is dated, for example, sex stereotyping in job titles and required ability levels.
  --**Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Manual** categorizes all occupations in the DOT, focusing primarily on titles and descriptions of occupational groups.
  --**Guide for Occupational Exploration (GOE)** contains an overview of 12 broad occupational interest areas, including specific questions counselors are likely to ask.

o **By industry--**
  --**Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) Manual** categorizes and describes industries. The numerical SIC codes are also used to tabulate data on industries and to access many databases of industrial information, such as the Thomas and Standard and Poor's Registers.

o **By instructional program--**
  --**A Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)** describes elementary through postsecondary programs in 31 areas, subdivided into 50 categories. The CIP includes coded classifications and definitions of program purpose.

The NOICC (1986) **Resource Guide** contains detailed descriptions of these and other related resources.

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To provide links between these various systems, cross-references or crosswalks were created. NOICC supports the National Crosswalk Service Center, a computerized database that cross-references the DOT, SOC, GOE, CIP, 1980 Census indexes of industries and occupations, and the Occupational Employment Statistics Program, which provides industry profiles and data on numbers of workers employed, using SOC codes.

Selecting Labor Market Information

Because of the amount and diversity of LMI, selecting the most appropriate sources may seem like an overwhelming task. The following criteria can be used to assess the quality of sources of LMI (Rosenthal and Pilot 1988).

o **Reliability.** Does the information seem to describe accurately the outlook for the occupation? Some materials, developed for recruiting or publicity purposes, may overstate the demand for an occupation, future earnings potential, and so forth. Materials produced for the purpose of vocational guidance usually are the most objective.

o **Comprehensiveness.** Does the source provide a variety of information about a broad range of occupations? The CIDS, described earlier, are examples of comprehensive sources of LMI.

o **Timeliness.** Does the source provide up-to-date information? Regardless of how comprehensive and reliable a source was when it was initially published, if the underlying facts or data become dated, it may then contain obsolete or misleading information.

o **Credibility of the Developer.** How reputable is the organization or individual that has developed the material? Some organizations, such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Division of Occupational Outlook, have earned a reputation for developing reliable materials. However, there are also organizations with vested interests that tend to develop self-serving materials.

Using Labor Market Information in Career Decision Making

LMI can be useful at any point: before a career choice is made, during a job search, or when contemplating a career change. A number of resources have been developed to help teachers and counselors make better use of LMI in career decision making. Brief descriptions of three are provided here.

1. *A Training Handbook for Using Labor Market Information in Career Exploration and Decision Making: A Resource Guide* (Lawson and Blair 1986) is designed to serve as a training manual to helf counselor educators use NOICC's (1986) *Resource Guide.* It contains step-by-step procedures for designing and implementing a workshop based on that source and includes handouts and transparency masters as well as information about specific workshop activities.

2. *Career Information in the Classroom: Workshop Guide for Infusing the Occupational Outlook Handbook* (OOH) (Kimmel-Boyle and Wheldon 1986) contains an instructor's manual and seven modules that will help teachers learn the concepts needed to understand the information in the OOH and infuse these concepts in career education. The modules cover such topics as basic principles of career development, developing infused activities, understanding the labor market and the economy, and exploring careers. Sample handouts and workshop outlines are also included.

3. *Improved Career Decision Making through the Use of Labor Market Information (ICDM) Trainer's Guide* (1984) is intended for use in training counselors who are involved with their clients' career decision-making processes. A primary objective of the curriculum is to familiarize participants with LMI resources and help them develop ways to use these resources with their clients.

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Digest

Latchkey Children

Ellen B. Gray

The Number of "Latchkey Children"

The majority of children in this country are now growing up in families in which both parents or the only parent works outside of the home. It has become commonplace in our society for children to take care of themselves for periods of time every day. Just how common this phenomenon is is a matter of some dispute. While recent census data suggest that only 7.2 percent of children between the ages of 5 and 13—about two million—spend time in self-care, many experts estimate that over a quarter of the children who are between 6 and 14 years old spend time caring for themselves, most of them regularly.

Effects of Self-care on Children

Not much is known about the adequacy or effects of these self-care arrangements. Experts are just beginning to question the results of children being left alone or in the care of an older sibling on a regular basis. Their conclusions vary. Some are sanguine about the effect on children's development:

—Galambos and Garbarino (1983) found no difference in academic achievement or school adjustment between small-town fifth and seventh graders in self-care and their adult-supervised peers.

—Rodman, Pratto, and Nelson (1985) found no difference in self-esteem, social skills, or sense of control over their own lives between fourth grade children in self-care and fourth graders supervised by parents.

—Hedlin and her colleagues (1986) studied 1200 children in kindergarten through eighth grade, and found that 80% of the children in self-care said that they loved it or usually liked it.

—Vandell's study of 349 Dallas third graders (1986) showed no differences in parents', peers' or childrens' ratings of the social and study skills of those who went home to their mothers as opposed to those in latchkey situations.

Other studies have reached very different conclusions, however:

—Woods (1972) reported that the low-income urban fifth graders in self-care whom she studied had more academic and social problems than those in traditional after-school arrangements.

—Steinberg's study (1986) of fifth, sixth, eighth, and ninth graders showed that the more removed from adult supervision adolescents are, the more they are susceptible to peer pressure to commit antisocial acts.

—Thomas Long (in press) found that as children spend more time unattended in their homes, the incidence of experimentation with alcohol and sex increases.

It should be noted that these studies dealt with different age groups, community characteristics, and outcome measures, and therefore are not strictly comparable. They also do not deal with a question many people have about the effect of self-care on children: What is the emotional impact?

Preparatory Programs for Self-care

A number of educational curricula have been developed to prepare children to care for themselves. These programs provide information, develop skills, and encourage communication within families about child self-care. Most are targeted to children who already spend time alone, but at least one ("I'm in Charge") facilitates decision-making about whether to place a particular child in self-care. Seventeen of these programs and books are listed in a booklet published by the National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse (1986) cited below in the For More Information section.

Effectiveness of Programs for Latchkey Children

Until recently, almost nothing was known about the effectiveness of programs designed to prepare children for self-care. One of the few evaluations of a program for teaching self-care skills which has been reported in the literature suggests the value of a specific kind of training program. Jones and Haney (1984) found that six 40-minute sessions brought the fire safety skills mastery level of 7 to 10-year-old children from almost nothing to nearly 100 percent. Gray (in review) found that a program designed to prepare latchkey children for self-care increased parent-child communication and agreement about safety and other self-care issues. The program also increased the children's confidence, but their loneliness persisted.

Alternatives to Self-care

Some families do not have to place their children in self-care but choose to do so anyway for any of a number of reasons. But for other families, self-care is the only recourse. Single parents who cannot afford supervised care, or who live in communities where supervised care is not available, must leave their children alone. Concern about this situation has stimulated action on many fronts. The Dependent Care Grants Program of the federal government, currently authorized for fiscal years 1987 through 1990 at $20 million per year, is a block grant for school-age child care and dependent care information and referral. Sixty percent of the funds from these grants—which were granted in 1986 to every state but South Dakota (which didn't apply)—is slated to go to program development, and 40% to information and referral.

Concern has prompted action on the state level as well. New York, for example, passed legislation to make $300,000 available to its communities to stimulate the development of new programs that provide care and supervision for school-age children.

The greatest effort in this area is being expended in local communities, however. Nonprofit agencies and local corporations are starting to provide after-school care, and some community hospitals even provide sick child day care.

Summary

It is clear that many children are currently in self-care. The exact number is not known, perhaps in part because this is such an emotional issue for some family members that they cannot be completely candid about it. Self-care is necessary at this point in our history because our social institutions have not kept pace with the "feminization of the workforce," but there is nevertheless much concern about whether self-care is good for children. Research on this issue is inconclusive. Among other things, this concern has prompted development of curricula for latchkey children. Although there is little research on the effectiveness of these programs, there is some suggestion that they do a better job of imparting information than dealing with feelings. All levels of the government and the private sector are responding to the need for school-age child care, but this response is slow and, as yet, inadequate. The issue of latchkey children is a sensitive one, and promises to be so for some time to come.

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Latchkey Children and School-Age Child Care

Michelle Seligson and Dale B. Fink

Concern about latchkey children has given rise to a wide array of child care programs. These programs are operated by public and private schools, child care agencies, YMCAs and YWCAs, and many other organizations. This digest offers an overview of these school-age child care (SACC) programs and the reasons for their growth.

Children at Home Alone

A Louis Harris poll of American public school teachers conducted in the fall of 1987 found that 51% ranked "children being left on their own after school" as a significant factor affecting children's performance in school. This factor was cited more often than drugs, poverty, divorce, or any other by the teachers sampled. Parents were surveyed at the same time, and 59% agreed that "we leave our children alone too much after school hours." Subsequently, the National Association for Elementary School Principals (NAESP) queried its own members, and found that 37% of the sample believed that "children would perform better in school" if they weren't left unsupervised so long outside of school hours.

These surveys reflect an emerging consensus which has been in the making over the past decade. Educators are only the latest, and perhaps the most influential, in a parade of civic and professional groups which have gone on record as opposing the growing phenomenon of latchkey children, and supporting the expansion of child care for school-age children. Even the nation's largest employer, the U.S. Army, has decreed that no child under age 12 should be left without supervision after school, and has plans to bring SACC to every Army post.

Escalating interest in SACC has paralleled the rising numbers of children left on their own. It is difficult to determine the actual number of latchkey children in the U.S., in part because parents are reluctant to acknowledge that they leave their children without adult supervision. All agree that the number is in the millions. Many have challenged the estimate of 2.1 million, or 7% of children aged 5 to 13, which was offered by the Bureau of the Census in January of 1987. The parental response to a Harris survey indicated that 12% of elementary and 30% of middle school children were left in self-care. Local studies have yielded even higher estimates: for example, 33% of children were found to be left alone or with a school-age sibling in Michlenburg County, North Carolina.

Lost Opportunities for Children

The potentially negative effect on school performance of excessive time alone may be the main reason that this issue is catching the attention of teachers and principals. But other groups have enumerated many additional risks to children's health, safety, and emotional and social development.

The research is suggestive rather than conclusive. A 1975 Baltimore study and a 1980 study by a school principal in Raleigh, North Carolina, showed improved school performance by children in SACC as compared to peers who were not enrolled. But a 1985 study at the University of Texas at Dallas found no significant differences in school performance between third graders at home alone and those at home with an adult. A 1985 study at the University of North Carolina found latchkey experience did not affect the self-esteem of fourth and seventh graders. But a 1986 study at the University of Wisconsin found that the further 10- to 15-year-olds were removed from adult supervision, the more likely they were to respond to peer pressure to engage in undesirable behavior.

The loss of opportunities for traditional children's activities is another concern. Most latchkey children will manage to get through their self-care without being injured, sexually victimized, or suffering severe depression. They may even do some chores and finish their homework early. But what of their opportunities to relax with friends, get involved in nature activities, or ride a bike around the neighborhood? As Joan Bergstrom points out in the book, *School's Out,—Now What?*, the way children spend the hours out of school has always been an important aspect of their development (Bergstrom, 1985).

SACC: Giving Children Opportunities They Need

School-age child care involves almost any program that serves children in kindergarten through early adolescence during hours when schools are closed. These programs are housed, funded, and administered by an impressive array of organizations. It is not uncommon for a program to be initiated by one organization, housed away from the organization, administered by a third party, and funded, at least in part, by yet another source. Organizations providing school-age care include:

- Elementary Schools: The NAESP survey showed that 22% of responding principals had some kind of before- or after-school care in their schools.
- YMCA: Approximately 50% of the 2200 YMCAs in the U.S. are involved in SACC.
- YWCA: About 29,000 children are served through its SACC programs.
- Boys Clubs of America: At least 18% of its 200 clubs now offer school-age child care on an enrollment basis.
- Camp Fire, Inc.: At least 17 of its 300 local councils now operate before- or after-school care programs, mostly in public schools.
- Association for Retarded Citizens: A number of ARCs around the country offer daily after-school care for mentally disabled children.
- Private Schools: The National Association of Independent Schools reports that a steadily rising number of its members are offering extended hours.

There are no national figures about the involvement of Catholic schools in SACC, but ADESTE, a SACC program which began at two parochial schools in West Los Angeles County in 1986, had begun in 67 schools within the Archdiocese by spring 1988.

Several local Easter Seals Societies run school-age child care and summer programs. Some are limited to the disabled.

Although there are no figures available, an increasing number of local recreation and park departments have switched from their traditional drop-in recreation to SACC.

What Children Do in SACC

Good SACC programs are neither an extension of the school day nor custodial programs which merely keep children out of harm's way. Rather, they provide children with a comfortable environment and a great deal of freedom to move about and choose activities. A good program has a balanced schedule that includes child- and teacher-directed time, as well as opportunities for children to be in large or small groups or concentrate on something by themselves. There are opportunities to try new games or skills, a place to read or do homework, and a varied curriculum. Many programs offer such activities as cooking, arts, storytelling, and sports.

A child who attends SACC is not necessarily denied access to other community activities. Good programs work collaboratively to see that children may attend scout meetings, sports practice, and other activities. Programs with children aged 10 or above have found that pre- and young adolescents need activities tailored for them. Community service, a chance to earn money, and understanding of the adolescent's heavy involvement in peer culture are some of the ingredients of successful SACC for this group.

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ERIC® DIGEST No. 73

Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

LEARNING MANAGEMENT

In an age when information multiplies exponentially on an annual basis, people need to enhance their ability to learn and apply the information important to them. They must sharpen this new "basic" skill because there is more learning for each individual to manage and so much about learning to be managed. In fact, Cheren (1987) terms this new skill group "learning management."

Unfortunately, some educators view learning how to learn as a mysterious, separate category of practice. They feel it requires special experts and programs and cannot be taught within the regular curriculum or at the workplace (Cheren 1987). This ***ERIC Digest*** will highlight various programs that teach learning management as a part of the total learning experience (whether in the classroom or in the workplace). All but one of the programs described in this digest suggest that learning how to learn can and should be an integral part of learning a content area; the exception is Weinstein (1988), who describes an undergraduate course that is part of the Cognitive Learning Strategies Project at the University of Texas at Austin.

The Learning Process

Much of what we experience through our senses goes into short-term memory, which, like a computer buffer, is of limited capacity. Most of that sensory information is rapidly discarded to make room for new information, but some of it is processed into the long-term memory. Cognitive psychologists have theorized that memory consists of systematically arranged networks of connected facts known as schemata. Learning takes place as new information is integrated into existing schemata. Part of learning management is controlling which bits of information are to receive this extra processing into the existing schemata (Carlisle 1985; Ross, Morrison, Anand, and O'Dell 1987).

Because adult learning is usually more self-directed and because adults are free to determine their learning objectives (except in certain job-related learning experiences), they must learn to manage their learning even more than young people who are still in school. Luckily, adults have an advantage. Unlike adolescents who may learn only the content that will be "on the final" and promptly forget most of what they learned, adults generally pursue a learning experience because they are interested in the self-selected content or because they wish to apply the knowledge (whether on the job or elsewhere). There is a motive, then, to commit facts to long-term memory, to understand concepts, and to practice skills—something that goes beyond obtaining a "passing" grade. Having a motivation to learn is the first step toward managing one's learning.

Learning-to-Learn Course

Weinstein (1988) describes an undergraduate course designed to help individuals acquire knowledge and skills necessary to take more responsibility for their own learning. A regular undergraduate course in which individual must enroll for a grade, it meets for three 1-hour sessions weekly.

Specific goals for the course, developed each time it is offered, are based on the following entry measures: the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LSSI), a standardized measure of reading comprehension, a measure of self-concept or self-esteem, and supplementary measures examining various aspects of cognition, anxiety, and motivation. Results of these measures are used to establish both group and individual goals.

The following categories comprise the course content:

- Executive control processes (e.g., goal setting and comprehension monitoring)
- Knowledge acquisition processes (e.g., elaboration and organization)
- Active study skills (e.g., pre-, during, and post-reading methods)
- Support strategies (e.g., methods for reducing anxiety and dealing with procrastination)

Although a variety of instructional methods are used during the class, emphasis is on guided practice and feedback. The strategies and methods under examination are discussed in what Weinstein terms a "cyclic manner," which relates the learning strategy under discussion to student-identified problems and allows for practice and feedback. The cyclic manner helps the students form a systematic approach to studying and learning and assists them to view the two processes as interactive systems.

The MUD Method

Memorizing, understanding, and doing (MUD) are the keys to learning according to Downs (1987). These tasks require learners to play an active role in their learning, as they decide for themselves whether to memorize (facts), to understand (concepts), or to do (physical skills). Teachers encourage the use of these keys by organizing content area learning experiences in a certain way. Downs (1987) advocates the following:

- Few formal lectures; group generation of concepts from prepared materials
- Planning for group work, especially in pairs to allow for equal participation
- The philosophy that views are neither right nor wrong; all are recorded
- Use of worksheets that are not assessed
- A "pondering" period allowed during each session
- Handouts and discussion to end each session

Furthermore, the MUD taxonomy is described and applied from the first day of the learning experience, allowing students to have plenty of practice (and success!) with it.

Downs (1987) found that use of the MUD method is in direct opposition to what teachers have been trained to do. Currently, the main emphasis of teaching is on product (or "outcome") and not on process. Teachers are trained to do the active learning steps such as breaking the tasks down, marking them, planning the material, and solving pupils' problems. Having the teacher do all the work, however, promotes "passive, dependent learners."

Group Problem-Based Learning

Barrows (1987) describes a problem-based learning method that enhances learning management skills needed by most professionals who engage in self-directed learning. This method calls for small groups of students working at a simulated problem in the area of study. (The model was developed for use with medical students.)

The model starts with the group setting of learning objectives and expectations. This process facilitates student awareness of their own learning needs and makes them more attuned to the kinds of information they will gather. As the groups think about the problem and discover gaps in their knowledge, they may alter their information search plan to include new information needs. This collection of information needs is then categorized and formalized.

Each group member is then asked to identify which resources he or she will use to fill information needs and to justify the selections. A schedule is established. As students undertake their research, they are asked to critique the resources used and to advise group members on resource selection and use.

When they reassemble, group members are asked once again to tackle the original, simulated problem from the beginning, applying their newly gained knowledge. Finally, students are asked to integrate and summarize what they have learned and to discuss how this learning has extended their knowledge and how it will help them with future related problems (Barrows 1987).

Learning Management at the Work Site

Cheren (1987) describes several training and development activities that take place at the work site and discusses how trainers can integrate the teaching of learning skills into these activities. For example, he suggests that the orientation program for new staff should also orient staff in methods of learning by having students use diverse methods; such information learning methods as interviews, journal keeping, and mentor/new staff relationships are mentioned.

In courses and workshops, Cheren suggests that trainers should always begin the course by reminding students that they are responsible for their own learning outcomes. He suggests that trainers ask several questions that help students focus on the information that is important to them, such as the following:

- (At the beginning of the class) Have you talked about this development effort with your supervisor/co-workers? Did you agree on learning priorities and applications?
- (During the course) Have you been reminding yourself about your priorities and emphasizing them in your questions and notes?

Learning to Learn Takes Time

Effective learners learn in very different ways, and each individual may use different learning methods depending upon the situation and the information to be learned. Gibbs (1983) says that learning to learn is a developmental process in which a person's conception of learning "evolves." Thus, it is not likely that a one-time "dose" of study skills will serve the learner for life. Rather, adult learners need to be made aware over time of different learning methods and to be allowed to practice and to try them out; some will work for the individual and some will not. In the long run, this growing awareness of learning management will help learners develop "greater self-direction in life" which is a part of the process of maturation (Cheren 1983).

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4

Executive Summary

ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report 4, 1987

Learning Styles

Implications for Improving Educational Practices

Charles S. Claxton, Memphis State University
Patricia H. Murrell, Memphis State University

ASHE-ERIC

This Executive Summary is a *digest only* of a new full-length report in the ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report [illegible] prepared by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, a sponsored project of the School for Education and [illegible], The George Washington University, and [illegible] the Association for the Study of Higher Education. [illegible] report is a definitive review of the literature and institutional practice [illegible] *late reports to* [illegible] committees [illegible] available [illegible] subscription [illegible] for $60 per year; $67.50 outside the [illegible] Subscriptions [illegible] with Report 1 and conclude with Report 8 of the [illegible] each [illegible] from ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Reports, One Dupont Circle, [illegible] 630, Washington, D.C. [illegible] Phone [illegible]

Teaching and learning practices in higher education urgently need improvement—witness the recommendations of several national commissions on higher education and the difficulties faculty face with the diverse preparation of today's students. Learning style is a concept that can be important in this movement, not only in informing teaching practices but also in bringing to the surface issues that help faculty and administrators think more deeply about their roles and the organizational culture in which they carry out their responsibilities.

Learning style has been the focus of considerable study, and a number of colleges and universities have made it an important part of their work. The many approaches to learning style can be examined at four levels: (1) personality, (2) information processing, (3) social interaction, and (4) instructional methods. One researcher, however, speculates that several models in fact describe correlates of two fundamental orientations in learning: "splitters," who tend to analyze information logically and break it down into smaller parts, and "lumpers," who tend to watch for patterns and relationships between the parts (Kirby 1979).

Learning Style Useful in Improving Students' Learning

Information about style can help faculty become more sensitive to the differences students bring to the classroom. It can also serve as a guide in designing learning experiences that match or mismatch students' styles, depending on the teacher's purpose. Matching is particularly appropriate in working with poorly prepared students and with new college students, as the most attrition occurs in those situations. Some studies show that identifying a student's style and then providing instruction consistent with that style contribute to more effective learning.

In other instances, some mismatching may be appropriate so that students' experiences help them to learn in new ways and to bring into play ways of thinking and aspects of the self not previously developed. Any mismatching, however, should be done with sensitivity and consideration for students, because the experience of discontinuity can be very threatening, particularly when students are weak in these areas. Knowledge of learning style can thus help faculty design experiences appropriate for students in terms of matching or mismatching and enable them to do so thoughtfully and systematically.

Outside the Classroom

Information about learning style is extremely helpful in student affairs. In counseling, for example, style may suggest which approaches to counseling to use for particular students. Further, when students have problems in courses, it can guide counselors' efforts at intervention. In orientation, it can help students understand their own preferences and strengths in learning and be a stimulus for developing new ways of learning.

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Learning style is useful in the work setting as well. It enables administrative leaders to be more insightful about using staff members in ways that call on their greatest strengths—a particularly important feature in the future as colleges and universities focus more on individuals' ability to perform tasks than on where they are in the organizational hierarchy. At the same time, the use of information about learning styles reminds us that an institution that is seriously interested in the development of students as a purpose needs to embrace such a concept for faculty and administrators as well.

Additional Research Needed

The most pressing need is to learn more about the learning styles of minority students—a particularly important subject in the face of participation and graduation rates that indicate higher education is not serving black students well. Changing demographics portend an even more diverse student body in the future, with increasing numbers of Hispanics and other ethnic groups. Instruments that take cultural differences into account need to be developed.

Second, research is needed to clarify how much difference it makes if teaching methods are incongruent with a student's style. Studies that speak to the role and potency of style, seen in conjunction with other important variables, would help teachers significantly. The development of better instrumentation to identify styles should be a key part of such research.

Third, research is needed to illuminate the connections and interaction between style, developmental stage, disciplinary perspectives, and epistemology. A better understanding of the link between them would provide a helpful framework for examining teaching methodologies, the role of learning in individual development, and the use of the disciplines to promote more complex and integrative thinking.

Steps to Promote More Effective Learning

1. *Conduct professional development activities on the use of learning style in improving teaching and student development functions.*

Professional development should go beyond traditional practices like sabbaticals and travel to professional meetings, as important as they are. Workshops, the use of minigrants for instructional improvement projects, seminars, and other functions can be very useful in helping the participants understand the importance of style.

2. *Promote the concept of classroom research and make data about learning style an integral part of it.*

Classroom research is an important strategy in achieving a greater balance in the way many institutions prize research and undervalue teaching, and the definition of research should be broadened to include not only research in the specialized disciplines but also in teaching-learning processes related to teaching in the disciplines (Cross 1987). Information about style, when linked with other data about students, holds great promise for helping faculty members to improve their teaching. The collection and use of such data, done formally or informally, can also contribute to a continuing dialogue among faculty and administrators as they learn from each other about teaching and learning.

3. *Establish curricular experiences that focus on helping students learn how to learn.*

Orientation activities or a credit course called "An Introduction to College" can be geared toward helping students gain a greater understanding of how learning occurs and their responsibility in the process. Inventories of learning style and other processes can be used to help make students aware of their own preferences and strengths. Attention should also be given to helping them develop strategies for succeeding in courses taught in ways that are incongruent with their primary learning abilities.

4. *In hiring new faculty members, take into account candidates' understanding of teaching-learning practices that recognize individual differences, including learning style.*

In the next 10 to 20 years, colleges and universities will hire thousands of new faculty members. In the past, the Ph.D., with its emphasis on specialized study in the discipline and its predominant orientation to research, was taken as the necessary credential for teaching, but today, with an increasingly diverse student body and research that clearly identifies the elements of effective college teaching (Cross 1987), administrators are coming to a greater realization that faculty preparation should include other areas of knowledge as well. Research in student development, learning theory, and ways to use the creative tension between content and process are all important prerequisites for effective teaching. Administrators have the opportunity to make a major contribution to improved learning by hiring faculty who have such preparation.

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ERIC DIGEST No. 85

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Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

LOCATING JOB INFORMATION

More and more people are looking for and changing jobs and careers more often. There are workshops, books, journals, special sections of newspapers, and many other sources for the person who is considering a new career or a career change. Good sources of occupational information are public libraries, state departments of education, and high school and postsecondary career centers. This **ERIC Digest** discusses how to locate information that can be used in career decision making.

Public Library

Public libraries in most cities have career/occupational information collections. Although specific services and titles available may differ, the basic collections are very similar. These collections include the following:

o Printed resources in the library--

  --lists of local, state, and federal government job opportunities and how to apply for them
  --newspapers from all over the country
  --state and local job listings
  --bibliographies of resources on various aspects of a job search
  --special supplements and job-hunters' newspapers
  --lists of foreign job opportunities and how to apply for them
  --descriptions of all types of jobs

o Information about associations--

  --directories with names, addresses, publications, convention information
  --joblines or hotlines with information about employment in the profession
  --information about interviews at conferences
  --information on workshops and seminars

o Information about local sources of job information, workshops, and so forth

o Information on specific careers--

  --salary levels
  --qualifications/education required
  --benefits
  --job market outlook
  --job descriptions
  --aptitude/interest tests

o Information about potential employers, such as--

  --size of company
  --location of offices
  --types of jobs available
  --salaries

o Information for special populations--

  --people over 40
  --women
  --minorities
  --handicapped
  --midlife career changers

o Information on job search methods--

  --how to decide which career is best for you
  --how to write a resume
  --how to prepare for an interview

o Sample military and civil service tests

Most public as well as university libraries have sample tests for specific occupations such as air traffic controller, beginning office worker, and mail handler, as well as general tests and other materials that would prepare you for any civil service test, for example, tests for women in the armed forces, practice for Army classification, general test practice for 101 jobs, home study course for civil service jobs, and mastering writing skills for civil service advancement.

The career information is in a variety of formats. Some public libraries have regularly scheduled workshops on locating information about occupations; they all have reference and circulating copies of books; they might have bibliographies or a pamphlet file with information about specific careers as well as about writing resumes, preparing for interviews, and so on. They may also have a listing of the jobs available through their state Bureau of Employment Services.

State Departments of Education

Most state departments of education have career information systems that are available to just about anyone through a variety of delivery systems. For example, the Ohio Career Information System (OCIS) is a computer-based guidance information system that provides instantaneous access to a wealth of educational and occupational information. Houghton Mifflin's Guidance Information System (GIS) provides the primary national data and the Department of Education adds details about Ohio. Information in the database includes employment projections, salary levels, job descriptions, financial aid opportunities, lists of various postsecondary schools, military occupations, entrepreneurship programs--a total of 13 separate files. OCIS is available through 26 data

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centers, in many local school districts, and in public libraries.

Those who want to access their state occupational information system should go either to their local public library or to the state department of education. If the system is not available for public access through the state department, individuals will be referred to an appropriate source.

School Career Centers

In addition to the public library, secondary and postsecondary career or guidance offices have information on specific careers. Often called the Office of Career Development, their services include a resource room, workshops, and other career-related programs. Typical topics covered are career planning, resume writing, job search methods, and interviewing. They also have interest inventories that will make career decision making a little easier. Again, if you have decided on the career that is best for you, they have information on specific jobs just as the public library does.

What Does This Mean?

What this means is that everyone has access to information about deciding upon a career, writing a resume, looking for a job, interviewing, and keeping a job. There are materials on the job market outlook, salary levels, opportunities for advancement in a given career, and working conditions. The best place to start when looking for information on a new career is the career information department of your public library.

Although each library and career center will have its own collection of resources on occupational information, there are some standard reference sources. They include the following:

The Career Guide. 1989. Parsippany, NJ: Dun's Employment Opportunities Directory, 1988.

This guide contains up-to-date, comprehensive, accurate coverage on employers and career opportunities. It includes lists of U.S. companies with 1,000 or more employees with the name and address of the company, an overview of the company, what opportunities are available, location of offices, benefits, and the name of a contact person.

Career Information Center. 3rd ed. Mission Hills, CA: Glencoe/Macmillan, 1987.

The *Career Information Center* consists of 600 occupational profiles in which 3,000 jobs are discussed. The profiles include work characteristics, job entry, education and training requirements, advancement possibilities, employment outlook, and earnings and benefits.

Gale, Barry, and Gale, Linda. *Discover What You're Best at: The National Career Aptitude System and Career Directory*. New York: Simon and Shuster, 1982.

This self-administered and self-scored career aptitude evaluation system is designed to help identify career strengths, set career goals, evaluate one's job potential, and familiarize oneself with possible careers.

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The *National Job Bank* discusses common areas of hiring activity, educational background needed, and benefits offered for specific occupations. It includes names, addresses, and phone numbers of those to contact for information about available jobs. It also includes a state-by-state list of companies, what they do, and whom they hire.

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The *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (DOT) gives comprehensive, standardized descriptions of duties of 20,000 occupations. It is designed to match job requirements and worker skills.

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This handbook includes information about specific jobs, working conditions, training and education needed, projected earnings, and job prospects.

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This almanac includes job descriptions, predictions for employment opportunities, salary data by place, jobs for recent college graduates, and a comparison of salary by city/region/state/company for all types of jobs.

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Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools March 1990

Making Education Work for Mexican-Americans: Promising Community Practices

Digest EDO-RC-90-2

THE 1980S WERE HERALDED as the decade of the Hispanic. Studies documented the underachievement and dropout rates of Hispanic students in our nation's public schools. Many reports decried what they perceived as the low expectations set for culturally and linguistically different students (Hispanic Policy Development Project, 1988).

While schools began to address the issue of underachievement, community groups began to implement enrichment programs that focused more on the affective domain. They established programs centered on family values and cultural pride. This Digest describes such programs and synthesizes their successful strategies.

Why the Interest in Hispanics?

Hispanic students have not been served particularly well by the educational system (Hispanic Policy Development Project, 1988; Quality Education for Minorities Project, 1990). Many students read two or more grade levels below grade placement, and comparatively few score at advanced levels on standardized tests. The National Assessment of Educational Progress reported that only 27 percent of Hispanic eleventh-grade students proficient in English scored at or above the "adept" reading level, whereas only 14 percent of those from language minority backgrounds did so. Nearly half of all Anglo students scored at this level (Duran, 1988).

The dropout rate for Hispanic students is high, 33 to 50 percent. In Texas, Hispanic youth are twice as likely as their Anglo counterparts to drop out; half of Hispanic dropouts do not finish the ninth grade (Cardenas, Robledo, & Supik, 1986).

Recent reports (for example, Horn, 1987; Valdivieso & Davis, 1988) present other alarming data. The families of about 60 percent of high school dropouts have incomes below $15,000. Moreover, 40 percent of Hispanic children—and 72 percent of Hispanic single females raising children—live in poverty. Finally, the poverty rate for Hispanics has risen in each of the last three years.

The average age of the Hispanic population is 22, and demographers predict that this population will double by the year 2020. Mexican Americans represent 63 percent of all Hispanics (Valdivieso & Davis, 1988).

Which students are served?

Community groups have established programs to reduce the high dropout rate among Hispanic students. They target "at-risk" students, that is, those with reading achievement two or more grade levels below grade placement, repeated retention in grade, or high rates of absenteeism and disciplinary referral.

Community groups also help cultivate the aspirations of talented Hispanic students. Though talented, such students may not be getting the advanced instruction they need to succeed academically. Such programs fill in students' background knowledge and refine students' communication skills (for example, in writing, speaking, and conducting interpersonal relationships).

Finally, community programs that focus on prevention help Hispanic children at the preschool level. Programs seek to enrich young students' experiences in the cognitive, affective, and motor domains. Sometimes, the primary emphasis is on training parents.

What do community programs do?

Marshalling resources from parents, school personnel, and business leaders, community-based programs address the precursors of students' achievement by increasing their internalized sense of competence and by enhancing their self-esteem. They help students feel valued and supported.

The Valued Youth Partnership Program of the Intercultural Development Research Association serves 100 youths in San Antonio (Sosa, 1986). This program identifies at-risk students as "valued youth" and trains them to tutor youngsters at nearby elementary schools. The valued youth learn how to be effective tutors and learn how to design instructional materials. Training sessions focus on communication skills, child development theory, and effective teaching.

As these students work with their tutees, they begin to see the rewards of their efforts. They begin to feel the appreciation of both their charges and their teachers. Moreover, as they teach, students reinforce their own basic skills and read stories at their level of independent reading. Field trips to sites of cultural and economic importance provide further enrichment to both sets of students—the tutors and the tutees. As tutors interact with Hispanic role models, they explore the benefits of an education and develop a sense of career prospects.

The Youth Community Service (YCS) program in Los Angeles helps high school students learn about their community and its people (Constitutional Rights Foundation, 1988). This program serves 22 high schools in Los Angeles. Approximately 800 YCS participants take a leadership role in identifying needs and planning activities. To deliver the needed services, the YCS students involve an additional 20,000 youth.

Adults from the community are important adjuncts to the YCS program. Adult mentors help students find meaningful and productive ways to help others. Added support comes from program staff who develop curricula that guide students' work. A leadership retreat and several daylong conferences provide further opportunities for developing new skills, for cultivating reflection, and for expanding networks. A year-end celebration summarizes students' accomplishments and recognizes the results of their efforts.

In Dallas, the League of United Latin Americans developed

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Project ONDA (Opportunities for Networking and Developing Aspirations). Thirty at-risk high school students attend ten Saturday sessions. The objectives include increasing students' self-esteem (by providing Hispanic role models) and enhancing the holding power of the schools (by establishing support groups). Peers, adults, and parents counsel students about goal-setting, being responsible, and prioritizing demands. School buses transport students to a community office. Community groups sponsor breakfast and lunch.

The Pasadera (or Stepping Stone) Program targets high-risk female students in the middle schools of San Antonio. The objective is to increase students' likelihood of being emotionally and economically self-sufficient. The curriculum includes training in assertiveness, physical wellness, and substance abuse issues, and it deals with teen pregnancy (including prevention).

A similar theme, that of developing students' self-confidence and interpersonal skills, can be seen in programs for Mexican-American students who might be bound for college. Although these students can make passing grades, they tend to underestimate their personal and academic potential. The National Hispanic Institute was started in Austin to help Hispanic youth succeed in their careers and personal lives and to become leaders (Obregon, 1987).

The institute operates five programs to help young people become aware of their talents and to develop their interpersonal skills. Each summer, high school students attend a week-long Lorenzo de Zavala Youth Legislative Session at the state capitol. They explore what it means to be Hispanic, and they learn what knowledge and skills they will need to develop to serve as leaders in the future.

Del Mar College (in Corpus Christi, Texas) encourages middle and high school students to consider careers in mathematics, engineering, or science. Its Prefreshman Engineering Program (PREP) serves 110 students. Students attend a two-month series of lectures, seminars, work sessions, and field trips related to the sciences. Field trips and role models expose students to such disciplines as traffic and civil engineering, electrical and chemical engineering, computer science, problem-solving, and plant pathology. During the field trips students get a firsthand look at professional life, and they also talk to experts in their own communities. A dozen companies in the Corpus Christi area serve as cosponsors of the program.

At the University of Texas at El Paso, the Mother-Daughter Program holds meetings once a month with Hispanic female students. The young women have passing grades but are not considered to be "achievers." They visit the college campus four times: for a campus open house, career day, leadership conference, and an awards banquet. The YWCA coordinates transportation to school and community activities. Field trips have included a visit to the courthouse, where a Hispanic woman presides, a visit to view works of art by Latin American artists, and a trip to a medical school. Mothers receive training on building self-esteem, encouraging success, and finding resources to support their daughters' education. Sessions are conducted bilingually.

ADVANCE is another program working with parents to improve their children's education. ADVANCE seeks to prevent child abuse and neglect through the parenting classes it offers to low-income Hispanic women in San Antonio. The curriculum addresses parent communication, discipline, and infant and toddler stimulation and nutrition.

What features do these programs share?

The programs offered by community groups share a number of key features. In particular, they:

- actively recruit students;
- serve a small group of students (25-100);
- direct personal attention at students;
- focus on enrichment, not deficits;
- target the affective domain (for example, self-esteem, interpersonal communication, and aspirations);
- validate the language and culture of students' homes;
- provide support and role models using local resources;
- facilitate other support needed to ensure attendance (for example, providing meals, transportation, and child care); and
- celebrate students' accomplishments publicly.

These characteristics represent three elements essential for the success of community-based programs (Cardenas, 1987): (1) Valuing students, (2) providing Support, and (3) forming Partnerships (VSP).

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MAKING SCHOOLS MORE RESPONSIVE TO AT-RISK STUDENTS

Introduction

Current approaches to educating at-risk students are the result of several shifts in thinking over the last 35 years. Now, a new way of defining at-risk students is needed for changes in school policy and practice to better meet these students' needs.

Defining Risk

Past Definitions. Earlier, risk was considered the result of only a single factor in a youth's life. Over time, policymakers and educators have identified different factors as *the* factor. Thirty years ago, the problems of school-aged children were attributed to *cultural deprivation*. As an antidote, children were provided with preschool compensatory enrichment that attempted to create a middle-class culture for them.

Subsequently, *educational deprivation* was considered the primary cause of at-risk status. Resulting educational programs focused on K-12 education, and the lack of fit between poor, minority children and their schools.

Another cause for at-risk status was thought to be the *failure of all social institutions* charged by society with educating youth. All youth were considered at risk because families, communities, religious organizations, and work places, among other institutions, failed to help individuals achieve their full human potential (Fantini & Weinstein, 1968). This definition suggested the need for basic restructuring of all the social institutions that educate youth.

A final definition of at-risk status is the *probability that a student will fail academically*, and/or drop out of school. This concept has been operationalized by identifying subpopulations likely to perform poorly or drop out (i.e., students retained in grade). Programmatic responses involved provision of early identification and intervention.

A New Definition. None of the earlier perspectives on at-risk youth conveys precisely enough the full complement of factors that put a student at risk. Since education is a process that goes on both inside and outside of schools, schools are just one of several social institutions that educate—or can fail to educate—our children. Families and communities, along with schools, are the key educating institutions in our society. Any definition of risk needs to be sensitive to these other educating forces.

Thus, young people are at risk, or educationally disadvantaged, if they have been exposed to inadequate or inappropriate educational experiences in the family, school, or community. This definition is intentionally vague about what constitutes "inadequate" or "inappropriate" experiences, as it would be difficult to secure agreement on what would be adequate or appropriate. Still, it provides some broad guidance for assessing the extent to which children can be described as educationally disadvantaged or at risk.

Policy Implications of the New Definition

The working definition of risk presented above is sensitive to the match between individuals and their environments, without becoming bogged down in fingerpointing over where the blame for a bad match lay.

Acknowledging the three sources of influence—school, family, and the community—highlights a critical weakness in most programmatic approaches to serving disadvantaged youth. Concerned solely with changing schools, most programs ignore the impact of the community context or family environment on a child's academic development.

Early intervention programs that are discontinued once children are brought up to par in school are inadequate in the face of the ongoing effects of the school, family, and community. What is needed instead are programmatic strategies that serve at-risk children all through their school careers.

Indicators of Risk

The five social factors discussed below are associated with a youth's exposure to inadequate or inappropriate educational resources and experiences. While these factors do not automatically condemn a youth to school failure, the presence of one or more increases its possibility.

Poverty. Poor children are more likely to perform poorly in school and to drop out than children from higher income households. More than 12 million children under the age of 18—or one in five children—were living in poverty in 1987 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1988). Black and Hispanic children are three to four times more likely to live in poverty than non-Hispanic white children.

Race and Ethnicity. Black and Hispanic students frequently score lower on tests than do whites, and are more likely to drop out of school than are whites. About 19 million children under age 18 were black, Hispanic, or Asian or Pacific Islanders in 1988.

Family Composition. Children growing up in single-parent households frequently spend much of their childhood in poverty (Ellwood, 1988). They score lower on tests than do children living in two-parent homes (Natriello, McDill, & Pallas, in press). More than 17 million children under age 18 lived in households without both parents present in 1988 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1989).

Mother's Education. Highly educated mothers provide children with educational resources that less-educated mothers cannot; their children do better in school and stay there longer than do the children of mothers who have not completed high school. Nearly 13 million children aged under 18 in 1987, disproportionately black and Hispanic, lived with mothers who dropped out of school.

Language Background. Children with limited proficiency in English, and living in homes where English is not spoken, face barriers to success in schools in which English is the language of instruction. Various estimates suggest that anywhere from 1.2 million to 2.6 million children had limited proficiency in English in 1986.

The Distribution of At-Risk Youth

Current Distribution. The highest concentrations of at-risk children are in urban centers and rural areas. The poverty rate for children is about 31% in the central cities of metropolitan areas, and about 24% in rural areas (Natriello et al., in press). Children in central cities also are more likely to live in single-parent households (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1986), to have poorly-educated mothers, and to live in homes where English is not spoken (Bruno, 1984; Milne & Gombert, 1983).

The regions of the country with the highest proportions of children at risk of school failure are the South and the Southwest. They include a substantial share of the nation's black and Hispanic populations. Poverty rates are somewhat higher there, and levels of educational attainment are noticeably lower. California, Texas, and New York contain more than two-thirds of the population of limited English proficient children (Milne & Gombert, 1983).

Trends. Using the five factors discussed above as indicators, roughly 40 percent of the school-aged population can currently be considered at risk. This proportion—and the overall number of at-risk youth—are almost certain to increase, if, as anticipated, the fertility rate of whites continues to decline, Hispanic fertility and immigration maintain their high levels, and blacks and Hispanics continue to be disproportionately poor. Barring any dramatic changes in U.S. society, the school-aged population of the future will be more at risk than the school-aged population today.

Matching Students and School

The working definition of risk outlined above emphasizes the match between individuals and their educational environments. In this view, the problem of restructuring schools to meet the needs of at-risk students is one of developing an environment, programs, and services that will provide them with appropriate educational experiences.

Making schools more responsive to at-risk students is extremely difficulty for several reasons. First, all students bring with them unique family backgrounds and school experiences that result in different educational needs. Second, schools are held accountable for a diverse array of goals, ranging from teaching basic skills to preparing youth for work. Third, the economy is demanding a larger pool of highly skilled workers. Fourth, schools will need to educate more at-risk children. Finally, there no best way to educate children, and a great deal of trial and error is still involved.

To make schools more responsive to at-risk students they must have the appropriate academic and nonacademic programs and services for students. Then they must correctly match students with these programs, and do it quickly, before serious education problems fester and become uncorrectable.

—Aaron Pallas

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Marketeer: New Role for Career and Placement Specialists

Introduction

Though several attitudes toward advertising and marketing have changed remarkably in recent years, and even a bastion of professional respectability such as the American Bar Association is on record as favoring discrete marketing by its members, resistance to marketing by the helping professions persists.

CP&P center staffs are often hesitant to employ marketing principles and practices in their program development strategies for three specific reasons. First, they may adjudge marketing to smack of crass commercialism. Secondly, they may perceive marketing as unnecessary. Third, they may consider marketing to be proper and probably necessary, but optimistic expectations of what it can accomplish are seldom, if ever, realized in actual practice so it becomes unworthy of any major effort.

All of the aforementioned beliefs are frequently the result of actual experiences that have confirmed for a staff the undesirability of undertaking any major marketing initiatives. These limited experiences, however, should not blind us to both the desirability and the achievability of CP&P centers' designing and installing effective marketing programs. The benefits far outweigh the negatives. And the consequences of ignoring the marketing imperative can be diminished impact, with eventual program stagnation. The difficulties that people experience are not inherent in marketing, but result from faulty conceptualization and implementation. Given an appropriate perspective and reasonable amounts of energy, commitment and skill, a CP&P center can have a useful and self-justifying marketing system.

A center probably can't spend its way to a good marketing program—although many do try, and one needs only modest resources to achieve many marketing goals.

Definition of Marketing

A functional definition of *human services* marketing reads as follows:

> Marketing in a human services setting should be targeted to increasing clients' awareness of critical needs and choices and assisting them to make informed decisions and plans with particular reference to how a given service, e.g., career planning and placement center, can be helpful.

Two basic tenets underlie the above view of marketing. First, we are born into and live and die in a world where marketing is omnipresent. A service which is not promoted may not even be considered for adoption and/or use because of ignorance of its availability.

Second, marketing cannot make a success of a poor product or service. As a general rule, it can be said that quality wins out in the marketplace.

Much of what can be described as marketing is appropriate to CP&P centers and there are basic concepts in marketing which deserve greater attention and interest from career planning and placement specialists.

Product and Service Life Cycle

Basic to marketing is the concept that every product or service progresses through a predictable life cycle of introduction to abandonment. Regardless of the length of the life cycle, the stages are the same:

Stage One: Introduction. In this stage, the product is new and has few competitors. The role of marketing at this point is to build demand by informing potential users of the existence of the product or service.

Stage Two: Growth. In the growth stage, there is a shift from building mass demand for the product by showing that it exists to stimulating selective demand, i.e., identifying and communicating why a given product or service is best and will effectively meet a user's need and interest.

Stage Three: Maturity. In this stage, the competition becomes very strong. The sale and/or use of one product or service is usually won at the expense of another as the overall level of sales is stabilized. It becomes important to stimulate further response to the product or service by identifying new uses for it.

Stage Four: Decline. In the decline stage, there is a reduction in the use of the product or service. However, the costs remain high because of the intense competitive effort that is still required. The key decision at this point is whether or not to abandon the product or service.

If CP&P centers adopt the life cycle concept in their view of products and services, they must respond to two specific challenges. First, it is apparent that each life cycle stage requires a different marketing strategy. Second, it is extremely important to find new products or services that will replace those which are in a declining stage and must be redeveloped or dropped.

These two challenges are very relevant to the state of CP&P as we know it today. In many areas, CP&P is in a maturity stage, even approaching a decline, e.g., employers are taking on the placement function themselves because of their dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of the existing services. The point is that career counseling and placement services may be in different life cycle stages. Therefore, we must identify the particular stage that each service is in and then develop an appropriate and relevant marketing strategy for it.

The Use of Marketing Concepts in Counseling and the Human Services

As broad social changes take place, it is important that counseling services be able to respond to these societal demands. We may either do this in a proactive way, demonstrating our viability and desire to meet people's needs and interests, or ignore the life cycles of our products and services, thereby risking abandonment and extinction because of declining usage. Several developments are placing the human services in an increasingly competitive and vulnerable position:

- Self-help books
- Self-help networks
- Entry of other helping services into areas previously served by counselors
- Availability of computer and other technologically based helping services

The future is likely to see a great increase in the number of self-help and personal growth programs which provide the client with the opportunity for "comparison shopping" before deciding where to obtain help.

A useful way to visualize marketing potentialities and strategies is to think about services and users in four different ways:

1. *Old services, old users.* The traditional approach, it says in effect, "Stay with what you know best, do what you have been successful doing in the past."
2. *New services, old users.* The next safest approach, with the risk in bringing out new services minimized because of the knowledge of the users.
3. *Old services, new users.* A difficult area because of lack of experience in dealing with the users, hence the possibility that service providers are not aware of their characteristics, needs, and interests.
4. *New services, new users.* The most difficult area of all because of lack of knowledge of the users' experiences with the product.

Major Relevant Marketing Concepts

In seeking to apply marketing concepts to counseling, it may be helpful to select the major ideas that offer the most promise for strengthening counseling in the human services.

1. The single most important factor contributing to new product service success is product/service *uniqueness* and *superiority*. The competition for services now offered by CP&P centers demands that they identify how their service is unique and why it is superior to the others.
2. It is crucial in a marketing approach to know your audience and potential consumers and their needs.
3. Product myopia occurs when an organization focuses on the product or service rather than on the needs that the product or service addresses. The best illustration of this from the counseling field is the continual priority that helping professionals give to individual counseling, while the public—students, adults or other clients—consistently downgrade its importance.
4. The success of organizations in developing new products and services is a function not of the amount of money put into research and development, but rather of managerial skills and expertise in marketing programs and services.
5. It is important from a marketing standpoint to use the service life cycle in anticipating and planning for both problems and opportunities. CP&P centers must continuously monitor changes in population subgroups that indicate different needs and interests, and make appropriate changes in how they present, prescribe, and provide counseling.
6. Synergistic interface is a concept of combining a stable product or service with new information or a high technology change. A clear example of this may be the application of computer-assisted career guidance to career guidance services.
7. A successful marketing plan is geared to developing new markets and new users.

A Marketing List for Counselors

The following are six specific recommendations and/or actions for enhancing the image of CP&P services and increasing their use by potential publics.

1. Adopt a positive attitude toward the use of marketing concepts and strategies in more effectively disseminating CP&P services.
2. Define what excellence and quality are in career counseling and placement services.
3. Develop an appropriate marketing strategy for each stage of development.
4. Make a strong and ongoing commitment toward the research and development of new programs and practices.
5. Maximize the building of synergistic interfaces.
6. Regularly and systematically assess user and potential user needs and interests.

Conclusion

The career planning and placement specialist must become a marketeer—versed in and committed to the use of marketing concepts and tools to improve the quality and extend the use by clients of career planning and placement programs and services. The ideas presented here can be adopted and adapted by a center to develop its own customized program. Adopting a marketeer orientation to CP&P programs furnishes the central focus on which to base realistic and realizable goals and priorities.

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Measuring Kindergartners' Social Competence

A.D. Pellegrini and Carl D. Glickman

At different ages, children develop different competencies. The competence hallmark for kindergartners is the development of peer interaction skills (Waters and Sroufe, 1983). Over time, these peer-interaction skills are transformed into other related competencies. For example, kindergarten children's social and dramatic play develops into traditional literacy (Pellegrini, 1985). Therefore, both social (for example, peer interaction) and cognitive (for example, reading achievement) measures should be used to assess kindergartners.

This digest advocates assessment of children's social competence, of which performance on achievement tests is only a small part. *Social competence* is the degree to which children adapt to their school and home environments. Social competence in young children is best assessed with a combination of measures—behavioral measures, peer nominations, teacher ratings, and standardized tests.

Why Academic Tests Are Not Enough

The argument for assessing social competence continues because of the over-reliance on academically oriented standardized tests. One method, which follows Zigler and Trickett (1978) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children's position statement on standardized testing of 3- to 8-year-olds (1988), includes assessment of both school achievement and peer relations as predictors of first grade achievement. Both these domains are important, interdependent measures of adaptation to school. The assessment of social competence calls for the use of observational data, teacher rating scales, peer nomination measures, and standardized tests. In short, multiple assessment measures are needed, particularly for decisions about grade retention or assignment to special classes.

Assessment of Social Competence

Assessment of children's social competence requires observation of children interacting with peers. While classrooms can be used to study such relationships, a playground maximizes opportunities for peer interactions, minimizes the chances of teacher involvement, and provides children with a greater amount of play. Children generally like to be on the playground with peers and typically exhibit high levels of competence (Waters and Sroufe, 1983). For example, tag—a game allowed on the playground but not in the classroom—elicits rule-governed behavior, the kind expected in classrooms and in society in general. Children try to play such games well because they want to sustain interaction with peers. Thus, children show their competence.

Research Evidence

In a recent study, 35 children of lower and middle socioeconomic status were observed on their school playground at recess through both their kindergarten and first grades. Classroom teachers assessed the children with two standardized tests: The Metropolitan Readiness Test (MRT) in kindergarten and the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Test in first grade. Children's playground behavior were observed and their peer-nominated sociometric status assessed. Teachers rated children's personalities for both years. (See Pellegrini, 1988, for technical details of data collection.)

The results indicated a number of important things. First, although kindergartners' MRT scores were a significant predictor of first grade achievement, they explained only 36% of the variance in children's first grade achievement scores. Therefore, 64% of first grade achievement was due to factors other than those measured by the MRT. When observed behavior, peer nomination, and teacher rating scales were included, 75% of first grade achievement was predicted.

The behavioral data present a clear picture: Passive children (those who are adult-directed and noninteractive) are less competent than peer-oriented children who engage in social games with rules. Games may predict achievement because the social interaction characteristic of games taps a number of linguistic, social, and cognitive dimensions that are incorporated into later achievement. For example, the ability to use reasoned arguments in games necessitates the use of language forms that characterize tests and school literacy lessons (Pellegrini, Galda, and Rubin, 1984).

The most reliable assessment contexts seem to be those in which children are comfortable and have opportunities to exhibit their competence. Measures taken in such contexts are more accurate predictors of first grade achievement than standardized achievement test scores.

We have tried to predict children's first grade social skills based on teacher-rated personality and peer-nominated popularity in kindergarten. These criteria for first graders' competence were included because of the often made, and valid, criticism that evaluation of primary school children does not include social and affective components (Haney, 1978). Too often only cognition is assessed. The job of schools is to develop good citizens. The ability to get along with peers and to act prosocially—as well as the ability to read—are important components of a democratic education.

We found that children's aggressive or passive interactive behavior in kindergarten predicted their antisocial personality in first grade. These predictors give us insight into behavioral dimensions of psychopathology in young children, because aggression may predict an antisocial personality, or other externalizing problems, and passive interaction may predict a neurotic personality, or other internalizing problems.

What a child does in games with rules predicts popularity. In games with rules, children must exhibit the social and cognitive skills necessary for popularity (Dodge, Petit, McClaskey, and Brown, 1986). In other words, they must possess and use the skills needed to analyze social interaction. Children who possess these skills are popular.

Implications

The implications are clear. First, if kindergartners are to be accurately assessed, they must be assessed from different perspectives. Their engagement in peer interaction during free play seems to yield particularly relevant results.

Second, we stress that tests provide limited data. Although kindergartners' test scores predict their first grade achievement, they do not tell most of the story. More of the story is told with more natural assessment techniques.

Third, if first grade success is to be successfully predicted from kindergarten experience, time and money will have to be invested. Granted, observations are expensive, but so are remedial programs. Observations of children should be conducted weekly for each child. We realize that teachers, administrators, and aides already have too much to do, and that the advocating of more assessment may frustrate them. These weekly observations, however, typically take less than one minute per child. Similarly, the personality scale done midway in the school year takes about 10 minutes per child.

Perhaps the time and money now spent on standardized tests should be spent differently—half as much on academic testing, with some money spent on social competence testing. It is probably cheaper to make the investment needed to spot potentially serious problems in kindergarten than to spend money later on juvenile detention homes and unemployment checks. No measurement of *anything* will cure society's ills, but assessment of kindergartners' social competence may be a step in the right direction.

This digest was adapted from an article titled, "Measuring Kindergartners' Social Competence," by A.D. Pellegrini and Carl D. Glickman, which appeared in *Young Children* (May, 1990): 40-44.

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MEETING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN CHILDREN

Introduction

Central to the increasing ethnic diversity of American classrooms is the recent influx of Southeast Asian children (Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian). Since 1975, 800,000 Southeast Asian refugees have arrived in the United States, and approximately half are under 18 years of age. For these children to acclimate successfully to American life, teachers and classroom activities must be sensitive to the various cultures they reflect, and to the unique, and sometimes difficult, personal experiences they have had. This digest discusses the psychosocial development of Southeast Asian refugee children in an attempt to identify effective ways of teaching them.

Immigration History

There have been three primary waves of Vietnamese immigration. The first began in April 1975, after the fall of Saigon; the second was between 1975-1978; and the third, between 1978-1980 (Huang, 1989). The first wave of immigrants tended to be more educated and Westernized, relative to later arriving immigrants (Blakely, 1983; Huang, 1989).

Cambodians and Laotians left their countries under devastating conditions. Many endured boat crossings in unsafe vessels and experienced violence at the hands of sea pirates. They spent anywhere from a few months to a few years in refugee camps in Thailand, Hong Kong and the Philippines (Nicassio, 1985). Obviously, these varied conditions of arrival had a significant impact on the refugees' subsequent adaptation to American life.

Cultural Influences on Child Rearing Practices

Most Southeast Asian groups share cultural values that influence parental socialization practices. Chief among these are the Confucian principles of filial piety and ancestral unity, primogeniture and lineage (Morrow, 1989; Vernon, 1982; Yamamoto & Kubota, 1983). The principle of "pride and shame"—that an individual's action will reflect either positively or negatively on the entire family—is inherent within each culture. Children are taught to respect their parents, older siblings, and other adults in positions of authority (i.e., teachers); and individual family members are made aware of their place in the vertical hierarchy. Mutual interdependence is fostered from an early age, such that obligation to parents and family are expected to outweigh personal desires or needs (Morrow, 1989). This is in stark contrast to Western values of assertiveness and independence.

In the Southeast Asian culture, individuals strive to attain the Confucian goal of harmony in social relationships, and in life in general (Le, 1983). Southeast Asians emphasize the family as most important in their child rearing practices. A typical punishment for a betrayal of obligation to others is to lock the child out of the house, which shames the child; the child "loses face."

Psychosocial Development

The psychosocial development of Southeast Asian children is influenced by the conditions under which they arrived. Some children arrived with their parents, others arrived as foster children through Operation Babylift, and the rest arrived as unaccompanied minors (Huang, 1989). The evidence suggests that the latter, mostly males, are particularly at risk. They tend to experience depression and behavioral problems, such as tantrums, withdrawal, and hyperactivity (Huang, 1989).

Another group at risk consists of Amerasian children (with Vietnamese mothers and American fathers), who were shunned in their homeland and whose arrival in the United States has not been particularly welcomed. One factor that has contributed to the stress of Amerasians is their lack of a family unit in a culture where the family is highly valued (Huang, 1989).

Although some evidence suggests that younger children may adjust more easily to their new environment than older children, for many, psychosocial development is marked by the tension between traditional and American cultural beliefs. Cohon (1983) notes that children may be emotionally at risk if they do not make friends. However, the development of friendships (and thus increasing familiarity with American ways) may put them at odds with their parents (Ascher, 1989).

Educational Issues

"If you want your children to be educated, you should love and respect their teachers" (Vietnamese proverb, Boston Public Schools, 1990). Walker (1985) has noted that younger children seem to adjust more easily to the school environment than older children, largely because this is their first experience with formal schooling. Those who have had some schooling in their native countries need to adjust to different teaching and learning styles. American education tends to be more Socratic, as opposed to the more passive learning characterized by

Eastern education (Walker, 1985). Thus, teachers need to be aware that some Southeast Asian children may have difficulty expressing themselves and being assertive in the classroom. Furthermore, parents' and children's respect for authority in general, and for teachers in particular, may inhibit them from voicing their views, as well as discussing any problems they may be encountering. This is exemplified by proverbs taught to children, such as "First you learn respect, then you learn letters."

A major problem encountered by school personnel and parents alike is the language barrier. It is not uncommon for official notices to go unanswered and for parents to miss opportunities to meet with teachers (Blakely, 1983). Not surprisingly, teachers and administrators often feel that Southeast Asian parents do not care about their children's education. However, the evidence suggests that parents are indeed quite concerned about their children's school progress (Bempechat, Mordkowitz, Wu, Morison, & Ginsburg, 1989; Boston Public Schools, 1990). In a study of working class (fifth and sixth graders) Southeast Asian and Caucasian children's perceptions of parent involvement, the refugee children reported significantly higher levels of parent involvement and concern over day-to-day progress, as well as greater control and supervision over after school time (Bempechat, et al., 1987).

A recent report of the Boston Public Schools (1990) indicates that Vietnamese parents see schooling as critical for their children's futures, but are accustomed to granting the responsibility for education to teachers. Similarly, Morrow (1989) reports that in their home countries, all educational issues (e.g., curriculum, discipline) were the province of school officials, and parents generally had little or no contact with the school.

Conclusions

There are several ways for educators to facilitate learning for Southeast Asian American refugees and the school involvement of their parents. They include the following (Keirstead, 1987; Huang, 1989; Morrow, 1989):

- Use Southeast Asian bilingual teachers and school-home liaisons as resources.
- Familiarize yourself with Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian culture.
- Find out the migratory conditions specific to each family.
- Ask all the children in a class to share information on their native culture and exhibit respect for the characteristics of each.
- Invite children to discuss issues with you privately if they aren't comfortable speaking out in a group.
- Ask parents who immigrated earlier to help more recent immigrants understand school policy, and to translate communications, if necessary.

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MEETING THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF DRUG-AFFECTED CHILDREN

By Linda S. Lumsden

The problem of drug abuse "has developed a new face—the face of a baby," note Donna R. Weston and colleagues (1989). Although drug-affected babies have been present in our society for several years, their numbers have risen dramatically since the onset of the crack cocaine epidemic in the mid 1980s. Lorraine Carli, spokeswoman for the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, states that crack, a potent smokable form of cocaine, "seems to have become the drug of choice for women" (Mitchell Landsberg 1990). And New Jersey's acting health commissioner, Dr. Leah Ziskind, attributes the rising infant mortality rate in that state to "the drug-abusing pregnant woman, and especially her preference for crack" (Landsberg).

Today, the first crack-affected children are beginning to walk through the doors of public schools across the country. Many members of this new "bio-underclass," a term coined by drug abuse expert Douglas Besharov, will require special services for developmental, behavioral, psychosocial, and learning problems caused by drug exposure. As more and more drug-affected children approach school age, school personnel must be prepared to attend to the special needs of these children and their families/caregivers.

How Serious Is the Problem?

Hospitals are witnessing a disturbing increase in the number of infants born drug-exposed. When the Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families conducted a survey of hospitals in 1989, fifteen of the eighteen hospitals surveyed reported a three- to four-fold increase in drug-exposed births since 1985 (George Miller 1989). And a recent national study of thirty-six hospitals conducted by the National Association for Perinatal Addiction Research and Education (NAPARE) indicates that approximately 11 percent of pregnant women use drugs during pregnancy. "Nationwide, an estimated 375,000 children each year are born exposed to cocaine," states Debra Viadero (1990).

Judy Howard, clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Medicine, makes the dire prediction that within a few years 40 to 60 percent of the students attending some inner-city schools will be children who were exposed to drugs while in the womb (Cathy Trost 1989).

What Kinds of Problems Are Prevalent Among Drug-Affected Children?

Researchers are beginning to identify a host of problems related to prenatal drug exposure. The characteristic behaviors of children who have been prenatally exposed to drugs are due not only to organic damage. Other risk factors—such as early insecure attachment patterns and ongoing environmental instability—also contribute to the difficulties.

Behavioral characteristics commonly seen in these children include heightened response to internal and external stimuli, irritability, agitation, tremors, hyperactivity, speech and language delays, poor task organization and processing difficulties, problems related to attachment and separation, poor social and play skills, and motor development delays (Los Angeles Unified School District 1989).

Initial findings of an ongoing study that is tracking 300 Chicago-area infants whose mothers used cocaine and possibly other drugs during pregnancy suggest that at three years of age many of the children have language problems and are easily distracted. Dan R. Griffith, a developmental psychologist participating in the study, which is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, notes drug-exposed toddlers in the study also tend to score lower than non-exposed toddlers on tests measuring their ability to concentrate, interact with others in groups, and cope with an unstructured environment (Viadero).

Naomi Kaufman (1990) identifies other difficulties that may plague drug-affected children. "At the least," she states, "they include a much higher likelihood of lower intelligence; short attention spans; hyperactivity; inability to adjust to new surroundings and trouble following directions—all traits that can lead to failure in school."

It is important to keep in mind that not all drug-exposed children are affected similarly. Some children display relatively mild forms of impairment—perhaps displaying short attention spans and exercising poor judgment. The extent of impairment in others is severe; children with more serious problems may be unable to follow directions, engage in highly disruptive behavior, and have severe language difficulties.

Drug-affected babies and children are often described in terms of specific areas of impairment. Yet Weston and her colleagues warn that when we generalize about characteristics prevalent among drug-affected babies or the lifestyles and personal histories of drug-abusing women, we may unwittingly begin to engage in stereotyping. Every child must be seen as an individual who possesses a unique set of strengths and vulnerabilities.

How Can Schools Assist in Promoting Optimal Development?

Drug-exposed children, like children generally, progress more rapidly when they are in a predictable, secure, stable environment. School programs designed for these children, therefore, must include structure, clear expectations, and boundaries, as well as ongoing nurturing and support (Los Angeles Unified School District 1989).

Teachers should strive to offset prenatal risk factors and children's stressful life situations by incorporating protective factors in the classroom and helping children cope with stress in more appropriate ways. According to the Los Angeles Unified School District, which began a pilot program for drug-affected three- to six-year-olds in 1987, attention should be given to the following areas when creating a classroom environment that will promote optimal development among drug-affected children:

- Have an adult-child ratio that is high enough to promote attachment, to provide adequate nurturing, and to assist children in developing more adaptive methods of coping.
- Create a predictable environment through regular routines and rituals.
- Show respect for children's work and play space.
- Organize the classroom so that materials and equipment can be removed to reduce stimuli or added to increase stimuli.
- Give special attention to transition time. Transition time should be viewed as an activity in and of itself. These transitional periods can help children learn how to deal with change.
- Attend closely to children's language development, social and emotional development, cognitive development, and motor development. Note how skills in these areas are being applied by the child during play periods, transition times, and while involved in self-help activities. Keen observation can provide insight into how a child experiences stress, relieves tension, copes with obstacles, and reacts to change. In addition, it helps teachers become aware of the ways in which children interact with peers and adults. (Los Angeles Unified School District)

Teachers should seek to acknowledge children's feelings before dealing with their misbehavior. This conveys the message that the feelings themselves are not wrong but the way in which they are acted upon may need to be altered. This approach often results in strengthening a child's desire to function within prescribed limits. Discussion of behavior and feelings helps children to develop the ability to distinguish between wishes/fantasies and reality, integrate their experiences, and gain self-control. Allowing children to make some choices in the classroom setting encourages a sense of responsibility and builds problem-solving skills.

In addition, those working with drug-affected children should view the home as an integral part of the curriculum, since research indicates that early intervention programs result in long-term positive change only when parent/caregiver involvement is emphasized. A genuine interest in the well-being of parents/caregivers can assist in establishing a strong home-school partnership.

Should Drug-Affected Children Be Placed in Special Programs or Regular Classrooms?

The price tag of addressing the needs of drug-affected children is difficult to estimate because it is unclear what proportion will need to be placed in self-contained special education classrooms, where the cost per pupil is considerably higher than in regular classrooms. Mary Ann Stowell, assistant director of special education in the Portland (Oregon) Public Schools, admits, "If I thought all of them were eligible for special education, I would be sweating bullets" (Kaufman).

The Los Angeles and Portland school districts both believe it is preferable to try to integrate rather than segregate drug-affected children unless it is apparent that they are urgently in need of special education placement. The stigma associated with enrollment in such a special program is one reason. Another is the high cost of educating children in special programs. The Los Angeles Unified School District spends up to $18,000 a year to educate each of the three- to six-year-olds in its Pre-Natally Exposed to Drugs (PED) Program. In comparison, about $4,000 per child per year is spent to educate children in regular classes (Trost).

Some districts are currently developing plans for educating teachers about the needs and problems of drug-affected children and how best to deal with them. The hope is that if regular classroom teachers receive intensive training, they will be aware of and able to attend to the needs of drug-affected children in the regular classroom. However, others fear that the quality of education in regular classrooms will suffer from the presence of drug-affected children and the demands they will make on teachers. This, they claim, may eventually result in a two-tier educational system, in which parents who can afford to do so may elect to enroll their children in private schools (Kaufman).

When working with drug-affected babies, "the challenge," state Weston and colleagues, "becomes one of learning how better to help drug-exposed infants with compromised capacities reach out to the world, and to support their families in creating a world worth reaching for." As these infants move through toddlerhood and into childhood, schools can join in this effort.

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MENTOR RELATIONSHIPS AND GIFTED LEARNERS

> *If we want them to achieve, we must link them with achievers.... One plus one—Pass it on.*
>
> H. Weinberg, The Public Television Outreach Alliance

One of the most valuable experiences a gifted student can have is exposure to a mentor who is willing to share personal values, a particular interest, time, talents, and skills. When the experience is properly structured and the mentor is a good match for the student, the relationship can provide both mentor and student with encouragement, inspiration, new insights, and other personal rewards.

The idea of mentoring is as old as mankind. Ancient Greece introduced the concept, and it was institutionalized during the Middle Ages. The term *mentor* does not imply an internship, an apprenticeship, or a casual hit-or-miss relationship in which the student simply spends time in the presence of an adult and information is transmitted (Boston, 1979). Internships and apprenticeships are valuable because they allow students to learn new skills and investigate potential career interests. A mentorship, on the other hand, is a dynamic shared relationship in which values, attitudes, passions, and traditions are passed from one person to another and internalized. Its purpose is to transform lives (Boston, 1976).

Research and case studies focusing on mentors and mentorships often address the effects of the mentor in terms of career advancement, particularly for women (Kerr, 1983). The research emphasis on professional advancement and success takes priority over clarifying the basic characteristics of the relationship and its importance to gifted students (Kaufmann, Harrel, Milam, Woolverton, & Miller, 1986). Kaufmann's (1981) study of Presidential Scholars from 1964 to 1968 included questions pertaining to the nature, role, and influence of their most significant mentors. Having a role model, support, and encouragement were the most frequently stated benefits. Respondents also stated that they strongly benefited from mentors who set an example, offered intellectual stimulation, communicated excitement and joy in the learning process, and understood them and their needs.

Kaufmann's research also underscored the critical importance of mentors for gifted girls. The study, conducted 15 years after these students graduated from high school, indicated that when the earning powers of the women were equal to those of the men, the women had had one or more mentors. In other words, the presence of a mentor may equalize earning power.

Mentor relationships with dedicated scholars, artists, scientists, or businesspeople are highly suitable for gifted adolescents, particularly those who have mastered the essentials of the high school curriculum. Many of these students have multiple potentials (they like everything and are good at everything) and may encounter college and career planning problems if they cannot establish priorities or set long-term goals (Berger, 1989; Frederickson & Rothney, 1972; Kerr, 1985). Such students may have more options and alternatives than they can realistically consider. Parents often notice that mentors have a maturing effect: Students suddenly develop a vision of what they can become, find a sense of direction, and focus their efforts. Some exemplary programs were described by Cox, Daniel, and Boston (1985) in *Educating Able Learners*.

Students from disadvantaged populations may also benefit strongly from mentor relationships (McIntosh & Greenlaw, 1990). Mentor programs throughout the nation (e.g., Washington, DC, Chicago, IL, Austin, TX, and Denver, CO) match bright disadvantaged youngsters of all ages with professionals of all types. Student self-confidence and aspirations are raised to new heights as the relationship grows and develops. Young adolescents gain a sense of both the lifestyle associated with the mentor's profession and the educational course that leads to it. These relationships extend far beyond the boundaries of local schools, where they often start, as mentors become extended family members and, later, colleagues. Said one mentor, in a Public Broadcasting Service documentary film (James & Camp, 1989), "This is not just a business relationship. I specialize in [student's name]." The mentor, a renowned journalist who works with one student at a time and offers workshops in mentoring, went on to say, "We unlock the future. Our relationship is valuable at various stages of life and in different ways." The student responded, "I'm glad he's so critical [of my work]. A mentor sees things in you, things you may not have seen yourself."

A true mentor relationship does not formally end. In this instance, both parties were energized by the process and said that they have continued to learn from one another, growing personally and professionally. They thought of one another as colleagues, although the student, currently a journalist in a large city, still relies on her mentor when she needs advice on a news story. They communicate by fax machine. Each has made an indelible imprint upon the life of the other.

The following guidelines, adapted from *Gifted Children Monthly* (Kaufmann, 1988), may be useful to parents and educators who wish to explore mentor relationships for gifted youngsters.

Guidelines for Educators and Parents

- Identify what (not whom) a youngster needs. The student may want to learn a particular skill or subject or want someone to offer help in trying out a whole new lifestyle.
- Decide with the youngster whether he or she really wants a mentor. Some might just want a pal, advisor, or

exposure to a career field, rather than a mentor relationship that entails close, prolonged contact and personal growth.

- Identify a few mentor candidates. If access to local resources is limited, long-distance mentors are an option. *Who's Who* directories and the *Encyclopedia of Associations* are rich sources of potential mentors.
- Interview the mentors. Find out whether they have enough time and interest to be real role models, whether their style of teaching would be compatible with the youngster's learning style, and whether they are excited about their work and want to share their skills. Be explicit about the student's abilities and needs and about the potential benefits the mentor might derive from working with the young person.
- Prepare the youngster for the mentorship. Make sure the youngster understands the purpose of the relationship, its benefits and limitations, and the rights and responsibilities that go along with it. Make sure you understand these things as well.
- Monitor the mentor relationship. If, after giving the mentorship a fair chance, you feel that the youngster is not identifying with the mentor, that self-esteem and self-confidence are not being fostered, that common goals are not developing, or that expectations on either side are unrealistic, it might be wise to renegotiate the experience with the youngster and the mentor. In extreme cases seek a new mentor.

Questions to Ask Students

- Does the student want a mentor? Or does the student simply want enrichment in the form of exposure to a particular subject or career field?
- What type of mentor does the student need?
- Is the student prepared to spend a significant amount of time with the mentor?
- Does the student understand the purpose, benefits, and limitations of the mentor relationship?

To identify mentor candidates, use your own circle of friends and their contacts, other parents of gifted students, local schools, local universities, businesses and agencies, professional associations, local arts groups, and organizations such as the American Association of Retired Persons. State Governors' Schools and magnet high schools for gifted students are also potential sources of information on mentors and mentorship programs.

Questions to Ask Mentors

- Does the mentor understand and like working with gifted youngsters and adolescents?
- Is the mentor's teaching style compatible with the student's learning style?
- Is the mentor willing to be a real role model, sharing the excitement and joy of learning?
- Is the mentor optimistic, with a "sense of tomorrow"?

Cox and Daniel (1983) and Cox, Daniel, and Boston (1985) have provided useful guidelines for establishing mentor programs.

For more information, contact Gray and Associates, in care of the International Centre for Mentoring, 4042 West 27th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6S 1R7. If you want to become a mentor, call your local volunteer coordinating agencies or clearinghouses such as United Way.

One plus one — Pass it on.

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THE MENTORING OF DISADVANTAGED YOUTH

Adolescents in our poor urban areas can be an isolated group, deprived of supportive relationships with adults in their families, schools, communities, and work places. This deprivation can result in poor socialization to adult roles, as well as a paucity of contacts and networks needed for educational and career success. Recently, planned mentoring programs, which purposefully link youth with someone older and more experienced, have become a popular means of providing adolescents with compensatory adult contacts.

These planned mentoring programs for adolescents are, by definition, structured, and their goals can be complex, ambitious, and even grandiose—preventing students from becoming pregnant, dropping out of school, or going to jail; helping them make a successful transition from high school to college; or giving them some undefined but dramatically better chance at life. The mentoring programs vary widely in the duration, frequency and intensity of the planned relationship, and some use a single mentor for as many as fifteen or twenty mentees. The recruited mentors rarely share the mentees' environment or have firsthand knowledge of their daily life at home or at school. Rather, they range from older, more academically successful students at the next educational stage, to mothers and grandmothers, to successful businesspersons.

Obviously, the quality of mentoring relationships differ enormously, as do the tasks that mentors and mentees agree to accomplish. Nevertheless, it is important to set some boundaries to the phenomenon and to distinguish mentoring relationships from other relationships that are simply a kind of help. The following definition should clarify some essential elements in mentoring relationships for youth:

> A supportive relationship between a youth or young adult and someone more senior in age and experience who offers support, guidance, and concrete assistance as the younger partner goes through a difficult period, enters a new area of experience, takes on an important task, or corrects an earlier problem. During mentoring, mentees identify with their mentors; as a result, they become more able to do for themselves what their mentors have done for them.

The Roles of Mentors

Mentors for adolescents must help compensate for inadequate or dysfunctional socialization or give psychological support for new attitudes and behaviors, at the same time as they create opportunities to move successfully in new arenas of education, work, and social life. In fact, mentoring can be said to include both *psychosocial* and *instrumental* aspects.

In their psychosocial roles, mentors act as role models and counselors, offering confirmation, clarification, and emotional support. Because poor and minority youth often move through contradictory worlds, an important psychosocial role for mentors is to help the mentee understand and resolve these contradictions. In their instrumental roles, mentors act as teachers, advisers, coaches, advocates, and dispensers and sharers of concrete resources. An adult who merely acts as a vague substitute for other missing adults, or who briefly helps with a school assignment or work connection, is not providing the sustained and directive support that is crucial to mentoring.

Salience and Social Distance

Although some of the most publicized forms of mentoring have been between extremely prominent adults and ghetto youth, it is clear that successful mentoring generally occurs when the older individual is not removed from the mentee by a great social distance. This is because, with distance, the mentors' values, knowledge, skills and networks may easily seem irrelevant or even nonsensical to the mentees, and their goals for the mentee naive. When this happens, the adolescents will at best only superficially cooperate, and are likely to become cynical and withdraw. However, even apparent social distance can be breached when the mentors provide those concrete resources that the mentees most need. A mentor who drives the mentee to look at a prospective college, joins in studying the catalogue, and helps with the application form is both offering important psychological support and showing that, through a series of small steps, distant goals may be within reach.

Matching mentors and mentees of the same social class, race and gender is not the only—or even the best—way to close social distance, and ensure a meaningful connection. Often, in fact, mentoring failures attributed to class, race or gender differences might more accurately be described as a failure to give teenagers the specific support or resources they need. When mentors offer their mentees sensitive support, timely contacts, and other appropriate resources, mentees generally find their mentors quite compatible.

Trust

A critical aspect of any developing mentor-mentee relationship is trust. As a first step, a mentor can build trust by helping the adolescent achieve a very modest goal. The mentor also needs to be personally predictable, and the mentoring program itself should be of some duration. Disadvantaged mentees come to programs with high hopes, great suspicion—or, more likely, both. Their conflicts are only exacerbated by erratic adults, loosely organized programs, or abandoned initiatives. All these serve to destroy relationships and to harden mistrust.

Particularly in large, complex programs, it is important for building trust in the mentees that the roles of the mentor are openly articulated. Mentors can be free to use any style they want in working with the youth—and probably should—but within a clear arrangement about what the mentoring should achieve for the youth, both the psychosocially and instrumentally.

Natural and Planned Mentoring

So far, there are insufficient studies of either the natural or planned mentoring of adolescents either to derive lessons about the differences between them, or to be clear about how best to structure planned mentoring. Drawing from natural and planned mentoring in organizations, we can assume that the bonds between natural mentors and mentees are stronger, because the two individuals have found each other, rather than having been assigned, and because their relationship proceeds fluidly over a long period, rather than being constrained by both program content and structure.

Some mentoring programs for youth appear so short and narrow in their goals that classical mentoring is unlikely to take place. It may be, in fact, too difficult to develop the strong ties of mentoring in some youth programs. However, some youth may be able to take advantage of the looser bonds of good planned programs, if they provide an extended network of social resources in which the adolescents can have access to ideas, influences, information, people, and other resources they might not receive through the stronger ties to one individual.

Realistic Expectations for Mentoring Programs

Planned mentoring is a modest intervention: its power to substitute for missing adults in the lives of youth is limited. Nor can it compensate for years of poor schooling. Still, it can improve the social chances of adolescents by leading them to resources they might not have found on their own, and by providing them with support for new behaviors, attitudes, and ambitions. When planned mentoring is intensive and extended, it can offer the important help with solving the contradictions of moving into the mainstream society.

Unfortunately, while planned mentoring can increase the availability of adults to a greater number of adolescents, it is unlikely to serve all who need it. Even should mentors be found for every young person, the youth must still make their ways to the mentoring programs, want to be helped, and find the support and resources of the mentors suited to their needs.

Nor can planned mentoring programs pluck adolescents out of poor homes, inadequate schools, or disruptive communities. Mentoring will always be effective only insofar as it accommodates, transforms, vitiates, or expands, the influences of family, school, community, or job. Thus the power of other influences in the lives of youth must be recognized in any attempt to reasonably measure the potential accomplishments of mentoring.

—Carol Ascher

This digest is based on a study, *Youth Mentoring: Programs and Practices,* by Erwin Flaxman, Carol Ascher, and Charles Harrington. It will be available from the ERIC Clearinghouse in early 1989 for $8.00. *Mentoring: A Representative Bibliography*, which includes substantive annotations of high quality topical materials, will be available, also in early 1989, from the ERIC Clearinghouse for $3.00.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL EDUCATION— THE CRITICAL LINK IN DROPOUT PREVENTION

A student's decision to drop out of high school is often the end result of a long series of negative school experiences—academic failure, grade retention, or frequent suspensions—that begin before the ninth grade. Dropout prevention strategies, therefore, must be targeted at the middle school grades, when the stresses of schooling related to a more complex curriculum, a less personal environment, and the growing need for peer acceptance pose grave danger to already disadvantaged students (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1988).

Even though research demonstrates the importance of middle schools in retaining at-risk students, the organization and curriculum of most do not meet the needs of young adolescents, who are going through a tumultuous period of rapid physical development and emotional turmoil.

Creating Smaller Schools within Middle Schools

Part of the problem in trying to restructure middle-school education is that intermediate schools come in a variety of different sizes and shapes. As many as 30 different middle-school grade configurations have been identified (Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools, CREMS, 1987; 1988), with the two most popular types being the grade 6-8 middle schools, now found in about one-third of all school districts, and the grade 7-9 junior high schools.

Much of the research on improving middle and junior high schools is aimed at making them look less like large, impersonal high schools, and more like caring, nurturing elementary schools, while still offering students a challenging, subject-specific curriculum.

CREMS studies (1988) have shown that while the grade 6-8 middle schools tend to be smaller and less departmentalized than 7-9 junior high schools, close to 50 percent of all seventh graders change classrooms at least four times a day. Thus, at the point in their lives when young adolescents are feeling most vulnerable, many are forced to leave their self-contained elementary school classrooms, where they spent most of their day with one teacher and a small group of peers, for large, often impersonal middle schools or junior highs, where daily they attend as many as seven different classes taught by seven different teachers and attended by seven different sets of students (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1988).

Increasing Personal Attention

While a more fragmented middle-school structure allows teachers in the school to specialize and be more expert in the subjects they teach, it also leads to weaker teacher-student relationships. As teachers try to deal with 30 different students every hour of the day, they have little time to address students' individual needs. They also have little time to contact parents or discuss student cases with their colleagues.

Yet, while less-departmentalized schools allow teachers to form closer relationships with their students, one study found that sixth graders in these situations were achieving at a significantly lower level (CREMS, 1987).

Thus, middle schools, especially those with at-risk students, must address both issues—positive student-teacher relationships and high achievement. Schools can do so by developing intermediate staffing practices, including semi-departmentalized and team teaching arrangements. For instance, one teacher may offer instruction in related subjects (such as science and mathematics) and share a fixed class of students with other teachers. Schools can also assign staff members to serve as "advocates and mentors" to individual students (CREMS, 1987) .

This more personalized setting allows teachers to keep closer tabs on frequently absent students and to work with them and their parents to prevent truancy. The team teaching approach allows teachers to specialize and develop expertise while still being able to network with other teachers to help students with difficulties.

Reforming Grade Retention Policy

Students who are held back one or more years are much more likely to leave school before graduating. Being retained one grade increases a student's chances of dropping out by 40-50 percent; those retained two grades have a 90 percent greater chance of dropping out (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1988).

While many students are held back in the early years of elementary school, retention is also quite common in the middle grades when teachers are looking for more specialized knowledge and academic achievement from their students. In the Boston school system, for example, nearly 12 percent of all sixth graders and 19 percent of all seventh graders were held back in 1987, compared with only 2 percent of all fifth graders (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1988) .

Research has shown, however, that retaining middle school students does not improve academic achievement and may in fact signal that schools are not helping students compensate for academic deficiencies that began in elementary school (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1986). Meanwhile, young adolescents are more likely to feel embarrassed and stigmatized than elementary students when they are held back.

Eliminating Tracking

Although the practice of grouping students according to their ability usually begins in the elementary schools, it becomes formalized in the middle school grades as the various academic levels become more fixed and obvious. Too often those students with the characteristics associated with potential dropouts—minority students, those from low-income or single-parent families, those with limited English proficiency or behavioral problems—end up in the lowest tracks. Young adolescents placed in lower tracks become locked into dull, repetitive instructional programs leading at best to minimum competencies. Moreover, students who have difficulty in just one subject area often end up in the lower track for all of their classes, preventing them from becoming high achievers in areas in which they excelled in elementary school.

Tracking young adolescents also restricts social interaction between students with different interests and abilities at a point in their lives when they are formulating long-lasting perceptions of themselves and their peers. Because minority students are consistently placed in lower level classes, tracking segregates students, reinforcing prejudices and fostering a feeling among young minority students that only whites can be high achievers.

Promoting Cooperative Learning

One possible alternative to tracking in the middle grades is cooperative learning where students of all ability levels work together in groups and receive group rewards as well as individual grades. Cooperative learning is especially appealing for middle grade students because it allows them to develop their interpersonal communication skills at a time when they are particularly focused on social interactions.

In some situations students learn thinking strategies more efficiently from each other than they do from the teacher (Strahan & Strahan, 1988) . They are responsive to each others' ideas and groups often solve problems more efficiently than students working alone.

Revitalizing the Curriculum

Health education should be an essential component of any middle school curriculum. Health courses need to include everything from instruction on proper nutrition to the effects of alcohol on the body. Also, given that teenage pregnancy is one of the most frequently cited reasons why girls drop out of school, and that the age at which boys and girls become sexually active continues to decline, exposing middle grade students to a complete sex education curriculum could prove to be highly beneficial.

Natriello et al. (1988) stress that providing adolescents with career education increases the salience of the school curriculum by showing students how the skills they are learning today can benefit them in 10 or 20 years.

Improving the Student Teacher Relationship

Much of the research on why students drop out points to negative teacher-student interactions. Likewise, students who stay in school often cite a "good teacher" as one of the most positive elements of their school experience. While adolescents tend to pull away from adults in their attempt to become independent, they paradoxically also have a strong need to bond with them.

Bhaerman and Kopp (1986) found that students are less likely to leave school when they work with teachers who are flexible, positive, creative, and person-centered rather than rule-oriented. Effective teachers should also maintain high expectations for all of their students and show they care about their students' success.

Many middle grade teachers, however, lack adequate training on early adolescence (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989) . Most are prepared to teach either elementary or high school students, and view their job in the middle schools as a "way station" before going on to assignments that they prefer.

Middle grade teaching is a legitimate, specialized profession. These teachers should be specially trained in adolescent development as well as in a subject area. As they counsel and mentor their students through their middle school years, teachers will be providing a climate that supports and nurtures at-risk students, and removing much of the school-based impetus for dropping out.

—Amy Stuart Wells

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ERIC DIGEST

MIGRANT EDUCATION

MIGRANT STUDENT RECORD TRANSFER SYSTEM: WHAT IS IT AND WHO USES IT?

When the federal Migrant Education Program was created in 1966 to provide supplemental educational and supportive services for eligible migrant children, it included the requirement that the records of migrant children be transmitted from school to school. Since migrant children move so often from school to school, this task was impossible without an effective communications system for tracking these students. Therefore in 1969, the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) was created to provide schools with a method to continuously maintain education and health records on migrant students. This digest will provide a brief description of the Migrant Student Record Transfer System.

What is the Migrant Student Record Transfer System?

The MSRTS is a nationwide computerized information network which maintains and transfers education and health data from school to school as migrant children move with their families. The primary purpose of the system is to assist the education and health communities in providing continuity of services for migrant children. Through the student's records available shortly after a move, school officials know the status of the student's educational progress and health condition. The federally funded system operates under a contract between the United States Department of Education and the Arkansas Department of Education.

From its base in Little Rock, Arkansas, the MSRTS records, maintains and rapidly transfers educational and health information on more than 750,000 identified migrant children in 49 states in the United States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. When a child moves, his/her records are forwarded to the enrolling school after MSRTS receives notification. The school can then concentrate on **serving** the child's needs rather than **identifying** those needs.

Why was the Migrant Student Record Transfer System created?

Prior to 1968, there was a lack of continuity in the educational program for migrant children throughout the states. In that year, representatives from 37 states held a conference to discuss this lack of continuity and other problems, including the transfer of educational information about migrant children from one state to another and from one teacher to another.

The Record Transfer Committee, established out of this conference, was charged with two responsibilities: (1) to design an appropriate student record and (2) to design a transferral system. The conference also asked the United States Office of Education to serve as the contracting and monitoring agency for the system.

Since its inception, the system has coordinated its efforts with local and national migrant programs, medical facilities, and countless other entities directly or indirectly responsible for serving the migrant population.

How are computers used in the operation of the MSRTS?

The MSRTS utilizes computers in all areas of operation. There are computers or terminals located in areas where there are enough migrant students to require a terminal. Most often, a communications center will accommodate several schools. The local schools may transmit critical data on the child by telephone to the communications center. Routinely, however, data are transmitted by mail, courier or telephone.

Computers are used by data entry specialists to enroll new students, to withdraw students when they leave a school, to update data on a student's record, and to inquire about student's health and educational history.

In addition to the immediate use afforded teachers and health personnel, computers are used to produce specifically requested data which may be used by local, state, and federal administrators.

Who are migrant students?

A migrant student is a child whose parent or guardian is a migratory agricultural worker or migratory fisherman who has moved from one school district to another or from one school administrative area to another during the regular school year. The child must have had his education interrupted as a result of this move. The move must have been made to enable the child, the child's guardian, or a member of the child's immediate family to obtain temporary or seasonal employment in an agricultural or fishing activity. The migrant child's status is based on his or her family's move and the type of labor in which the parent is involved. Migrant statuses are: (1) currently interstate agricultural, (2) intrastate migratory agricultural, (3) former migratory agricultural, (4) currently interstate migratory fisher, (5) intrastate migratory fisher, and (6) former migratory fisher.

What are the unique problems of migrant students?

The migrant child who travels constantly with his family is almost always confronted with other critical problems. Poverty and deprivation have become a way of life for many of these children. The family is usually isolated from the community by distance, language barriers, and cultural differences. Thus, educational discontinuity is a problem that often is intensified by the presence of emotional and physical problems.

On the average, migrants are 1 year older than their classmates. Their drop out rate begins to accelerate in the eighth grade. Their needs include not only compensation for missed schooling, but often bilingual or English language instruction. [illegible] achievements of migrant children appear to fall farther behind that of the general population as the children get older (Education Times, October 1981). High schools face a different but related problem: keeping track of whether a migrant student is accumulating enough credits in the right courses for graduation. Before the inception of the MSRTS the retention rate of migrant students through high school was nearly zero. Today, the graduation rate for migrant students is estimated to be between 10% and 20%.

Cohesive and well-planned cooperative educational pacts are essential to a successful migrant education program. That is, if educational continuity in the migrant child's program is to be achieved, there must be regional and interstate cooperation and planning. For the migrant student, schooling remains a rapid succession of schools and teachers, but through increasing coordination, every new classroom the migrant student enters can be a true home room.

The MSRTS has brought migrant education a long way in its 15 years of operation. However, the overall needs of the migrant child can be met only partially by a program such as the Migrant Student Record Transfer System. Further advances are possible if federal funding continues.

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Who does the Migrant Student Record Transfer System serve?

Any school, agency, or organization that serves migrant children is eligible for the services of the Migrant Student Record Transfer System. The MSRTS has been implemented in approximtely 25,500 schools throughout the country. The system provides school officials, administrators, principals, teachers, nurses, and others with up-to-date information on migrant students.

In addition to transmitting student records, the system also provides management reports and reports in other program areas to state program administrators upon request. These reports are used by program administrators to evaluate and assess program effectiveness and needs. Such information sharing has become invaluable to many states, schools, and health facilities that must know the number of migrant students they are serving, and, just as importantly, those students' educational and health profiles. The MSRTS is responsible for the training of state and local personnel on an ongoing basis. Upon completion of this training, teachers, nurses, clerks, administrators, and state directors are able to implement the computerized system in their specific locality.

If utilized to its full potential, the MSRTS can serve as an excellent planning and evaluation tool for state programs, schools, or health facilities serving migrants.

Who utilizes the Migrant Student Record Transfer System?

The MSRTS is utilized by approximately 30% of the public schools in the United States, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The system is utilized by countless health facilities located throughout these areas which are subcontracted to provide health services to migrant students. State migrant education programs utilize the system's data retrieval capabilities. Many states request and receive various management reports created and produced by the MSRTS. Again, this information is used in countless ways to improve local migrant education operations.

What is the MSRTS training process and who is trained?

Training is the one most important element in the operation of the MSRTS. The success of the program over the years can be attributed to effective training by the MSRTS personnel. Although training styles or tools may differ with each trainer, the main objective of the training itself has remained the same for 15 years — to make appropriate personnel aware of the MSRTS process and how to most effectively implement it locally.

MSRTS training is done through regular workshops held either at the MSRTS headquarters or at a specific local site. These training sessions may be billed as regional workshops, local site training, stream conferences, national conferences, or MSRTS quarterly workshops.

Training is done most often by MSRTS personnel (i.e., regional supervisors, regional coordinators, managers, or data processing staff) in Little Rock, Arkansas. Participants in training sessions usually include new or veteran MSRTS personnel such as clerks, aides, data entry specialists, health personnel, and program administrators.

The training curriculum during these sessions may include any of the following items of information: the MSRTS Health Record, the MSRTS Education Record, the Data Entry Specialists Operations Manual, and training in computer and program operations.

How does the MSRTS serve as a link between migrant education and migrant health?

While the MSRTS provides both health and educational histories of the migrant student, the complete profile given is what makes the program invaluable. The child's health will almost inevitably affect his/her educational well being. Therefore, it is of ultimate importance that information sharing be an intricate part of all school and health facilities.

Upon enrollment in a new school, the child's academic data, such as participation in special programs, special interests, or skill levels are used to place the child. However, the child's physical exam results, innoculations, dental services, and any other health information unique to the child are also necessary.

The collaboration between the health and education entities removes the possibility of providing needless health services to the migrant child while bringing any critical problems the child has that may affect his/her learning capabilities to the attention of school personnel. Often, such information is in the form of a critical data message which accompanies the child's educational data. This message contains information considered vital to the initial placement and care of the child.

How do schools and health facilities utilize the Education and Health Records?

The purpose of the MSRTS Education and Health Records is to provide necessary personnel with a comprehensive profile of a migrant student who recently enrolled in a school. The child's educational and medical history has been generated in the form of a record and is transmitted to each new school with updated information as the child moves.

In a nutshell, the Education and Health Records assure proper placement of migrant students in a timely manner. The health record contributes to this service by providing health personnel with an up-to-date profile of the child's health problems or services received, thereby avoiding duplication of services.

How and where can more information be obtained about the MSRTS?

Additional information about the MSRTS may be obtained in any one of the following ways:

- contact the local migrant program office in your school district
- contact your state's migrant education program under the auspices of the state's education department,
- contact the Migrant Student Record Transfer System by writing to

Migrant Student Record Transfer System
Arch Ford Education Building
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
(501) 371-1850

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ERIC DIGEST

MIGRANT EDUCATION

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MIGRANT STUDENTS AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

Children of migrant farmworkers are among the segments of the population most difficult to educate. In addition to culture and language differences, migrant students encounter special problems due to frequent moving, lack of continuity in schooling, and obligations to contribute financially at an early age. Their dropout rate is alarming: when educators first began to address the problem of migrant education they found virtually no migrant students enrolled at the secondary level. In recent years, however, the Migrant Education Program has been working with high schools to improve their ability to reach migrant secondary students. Migrant education has helped the public education system to serve more migrant students than ever before; the next step must be to help serve these students more successfully.

How did Migrant Education begin?

In 1966, various advocacy leagues successfully enacted an amendment to Title I to include special provisions for Migrant Education. These provisions include comparable access, parent involvement, interstate coordination, and supplementary services such as tutoring. Even with such a program in place, reaching migrant secondary students has remained a problem.

Why are there so few migrant secondary students?

Measuring exact dropout rates for migrant students is a difficult arrangement since their mobility makes accurate counts almost impossible. However, data compiled in 1974 from the Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) show that the average migrant student had just a 40% chance of reaching the 9th grade, an 11% chance of reaching the 12th grade, and less than a 10% chance of actually graduating from high school. Other surveys uphold this staggering rate of attrition, and indicate that most students leave school in the 9th or 10th grade.

Surveys of dropouts also show that certain factors are strongly correlated with students quitting school:

- --failure in classes; dislike of school; having very few credits (SUNY survey, 1985);
- --little involvement in extracurricular activities; poor grades; extensive migration; dislike of school; a perception of being poorer than other students (Medina, 1982);
- --limited fluency in English; a history of transiency; lack of self-assurance, support and clarity about goals (Gilchrist, 1983);
- --perceived lack of family support and financial pressures (Nelken & Gallo, 1978);
- --being overaged for one's grade group; little interest in school; poor grades; negative parental attitude (New York State Department of Education, 1965).

These dropout studies reveal some of the conditions against which these children must struggle to succeed. What surveys do not reveal are the conditions in the secondary school system which, while adequate for resident students, become detrimental to the success of the mobile student.

What are the special needs of migrant secondary students?

No single definitive list exists of the needs of migrant secondary school students. These needs are as varied as the students themselves. However, need must be determined in order to design programs.

AFFECTIVE NEEDS are perceived by migrant school staff to be at the root of many students' cognitive failures. Repeated experiences of frustration and failure, and lack of acceptance due to mobility have produced low self-concept, feelings of isolation, and reduced motivation. Motivation studies show that peiple who are not generally successful at a task need 90% positive reinforcement to keep trying-and unfortunately most migrant students fall into this category. Providing a supportive, positive atmosphere can be highly productive and have great impact on the acceptance, goal setting, and role model identification.

COGNITIVE NEEDS are specific, practical needs for academic success and include the following:

- --Remedial assistance in math, reading, ESL, etc.
- --Study skills development
- --Time management
- --Academic and vocational guidance

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TECHNICAL NEEDS reflect problems which students encounter with school systems and which affect them individually, but over which they have no control:

--Inappropriate age/grade placement. (This is the highest predictor of dropout behavior, with a 99% dropout rate for students more than one year overage.)

--Credit deficiencies due to frequent moves and no means for earning partial credits.

--Inadequate knowledge of graduation requirements which vary from district to district. Since addressing the needs of migrant students is a multi-level, multi-faceted undertaking, solutions of many kinds are required. Fortunately, many effective ones are already available.

What direct services can secondary schools offer to assist migrant students?

ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE

--COUNSELING. Effective migrant student counselors pay particular attention to credit completion, graduation requirements, status of competency exams, career and vocational education opportunities, and parental contact.

--CREDIT ACCRUAL. Programs such as California's Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS) enable students to make up or earn extra credits when away from school.

--TUTORING. Tutoring centers may be used for credit, credit make-up, ESL instruction, and after hours study. Peer tutors, when both tutor and student are migrant students, are especially effective since both benefit from the arrangement.

--EXTENDED DAY/WEEK/YEAR PROGRAMS. Migrant students have proven to be willing and eager to take advantage of after school, before school, evening, Saturday, and summer programs. Migrant Work-Study and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) positions can also provide after hours career education and on-the-job training.

--SPECIAL SUMMER PROGRAMS. Many summer programs exist to provide extracurricular and leadership experiences, and to motivate students toward higher educations. "Adelante," "Yo Puedo," the 4-H Mini-Corps Leadership program, and the New York State Summer Leadership Conference all provide unique college campus or outdoor experiences for migrant students.

CAREER AWARENESS

--WORK EXPERIENCE programs have proven to be one of the most powerful prescriptions available to migrant staff to cure the dropo syndrome. They provide the least employable students with an opportunity to learn basic job skills and to benefit from the positive effects of a work experience program. These benefits include ESL practice in a real life environment, an increased sense of belonging, financial assistance, academic credit, and possible future employment.

--VOCATIONAL EDUCATION can give migrant students valuable opportunities to experience careers other than farmworking.

ALTERNATIVE SUPPORT PROGRAMS

--COOPERATIVE PROJECTS are successful in several parts of the country:4-H, the Cooperative Extension Service's youth program, assists communities to organize clubs which cover topics ranging from nutrition and crafts to leadership and community service.La Familia is a total educational program serving the entire migrant family in cooperation with public schools, adult education, and community colleges.Girl and Boy Scouts, YMCA and YWCA, public libraries, health organizations, and private businesses have also worked cooperatively with Migrant Education.

--HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PROGRAMS (HEP's) are designed to serve high school dropouts. Participants earn high school equivalency diplomas through individualized, self-paced study programs, as well as receive career and cultural education. Over half of the HEP students are from very low income migrant families with a prevalence of "predictors of educational failure," yet the program has met with a great deal of success and enthusiasm from students students and educators alike. Between 1980-1984, 85% of HEP participants passed their general exams (Riley, 1985).

POST-SECONDARY PROGRAMS

Even "successful" migrant children are high risk students, at both the high school and college levels. For this reason, several follow-up programs have been designed to provide continued support.

--COLLEGE ASSISTANCE MIGRANT PROGRAM (CAMP) is a Title IV program that supports migrant students planning to enter the university by providing tutoring, orientations, and counseling. CAMP success rates are also impressive. From 1980-1984, 92% of CAMP students had completed at least one year of college, 13% had earned two-year degrees, 15% had completed four-year degrees, and 2% had earned graduate degrees (Riley, 1985)-a significant increase since the days when even migrant secondary students were practically non-existent.

--COLLEGE BOUND is a summer program for high school seniors which helps them make the transition from high school to college. Students study, work, and receive assistance and counseling at a college campus. Over 90% of College Bound students enroll in college the following semester.

--MINI-CORPS is a Migrant education teacher training program which is designed to provide experience and support for teachers-in-training, and simultaneously provide classroom assistance to migrant children by a former migrant student who is an identifiable role model.

What changes can we make in school systems to help meet migrant student needs?

System level changes involve more long term alterations in the way the educational system serves migrant children. By working within the system to encourage and train innovative educators, migrant programs can help schools to facilitate, rather than deter, the success of migrant students.

CHANGE AT THE SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEVELS

--RESPONSIVE SCHOOL POLICIES have included:
Credit exchange programs to accomodate frequent moves;
Close monitoring of course credits to prevent deficiencies;
Credit completion programs, partial credit options, and supplementary study programs to allow for late fall arrivals and early spring departures;
In-school alternatives to suspension, such as detention study halls, to avoid unnecessary absences.

--STAFF DEVELOPMENT provides teachers with opportunitites to take college courses in relevant areas such as remedial reading, ESL, Spanish language, and cultural differences.

--ROLE MODELS in schools have a powerful effect on the success of migrant students. Migrant program workers can encourage the hiring of migrant and bilingual staff.

--PARENT INVOLVEMENT has been shown to be a strong indicator in students' success. Schools must provide the following to involve migrant parents: notices to parents in their own language; bilingual staff to answer questions; and effective means for communication between parents, students, teachers, administrators.

--ADVOCACY for student needs is probably the most demanding activity for migrant staff at the high school level. Migrant staff advocate for appropriate class schedules, test and credit make-up, and special tutoring hours, as well as make student needs known to administrators.

CHANGES AT THE REGIONAL AND STATE LEVELS

--STAFF DEVELOPMENT. Large districts, regions, counties, and states have the ability to build broad staff development programs. Statewide programs are common, keeping migrant staff well-trained in methods of teaching migrant students. Talent exchange policies are also effective ways to pass along specialized knowledge.

--MODEL PROGRAMS. State and regional resource centers such as the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) help to identify and distribute information on model programs and special projects in migrant education. These centers may also contain libraries with a variety of migrant-related material, and staff can provide technical assistance and information on community services.

--ADVOCACY. The efforts of state and regional programs can influence changes in migrant education legislation, legal decisions protecting migrant children's rights, and the interstate adoption of programs such as PASS.

CHANGES AT THE INTERSTATE AND NATIONAL LEVELS

Many organizations and programs have been created to provide technical assistance for migrant education:

--Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS) transfers information for migrant students moving between schools;

--Migrant Education Recruitment and Education Taskforce (MERIT) provides advance information to programs in receiving states about the movement of migrant families.

--Secondary Credit Exchange (SCE) seeks to improve students' credit accrual through communication between the home-base and receiving schools.

--National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education (NASDME) investigates current research on migrant education that may prove useful nationwide.

--Migrant Educators' National Training OutReach (MENTOR) provides correspondence courses on educating migrant students.

Other organizations can be found in the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools' Directory of Organizations and Programs in Migrant Education.

In addition to these programs, information dissemination is an important service at the national level. Various projects produce national newsletters. The ERIC/CRESS data base provides special bulletins on migrant education, as does the Migrant Education Resource List and Information Network (MERIT).

Summary

The following are some recommendations outlining components of a secondary program that appear to be effective, as well as other areas in which improvement could be made to improve the success of migrant students.

- --Establishment of a comprehensive secondary counseling plan, including academic, career, and individual students.
- --A comprehensive career experience/work-study program.
- --Development of parent education programs.
- --Improved identification and recruitment of interstate students and dropouts.
- --District policies that recognize migrant students' special needs.
- --Increased options for credit accrual.

With these efforts, we hope that migrant students will grow to contribute to the intellectual productivity and wealth of this country, as their parents have contributed to its agricultural productivity and wealth.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

The Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Model

Overview

Traditional organizational patterns for school guidance have emphasized the position and duties of the counselor or the therapeutic process of counseling, at the expense of a coherent programmatic focus. As a consequence, guidance has been widely regarded as an ancillary support service, rather than as an integral part of education. This pattern has placed counselors in a remedial and reactive role, a role in which their duties were ill-defined, large blocks of time were spent working with a small number of students, and they were likely to be saddled with extra administrative and clerical duties, such as scheduling and record keeping.

In response to this widespread lack of an appropriate organizational structure, Norman C. Gysbers and associates at the University of Missouri (Columbia) developed a Comprehensive Guidance Program Model that has been adopted by schools and statewide educational agencies throughout the country, from Alaska to New Hampshire (Starr & Gysbers, 1988). The purpose of the model is to help districts develop comprehensive and systematic developmental guidance programs, kindergarten through grade twelve. It is also to provide guidance with specific educational content, with accountability for attaining certain student competencies. When fully implemented, the program allows counselors to devote all their time to the program, thus eliminating many of the non-guidance related tasks that they now carry out.

What Are the Components of the Program?

The Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program Model has two major parts: **structural** and **programmatic**. The **structural** part has five components: Definition and Philosophy, Facilities, Advisory Council, Resources, and Staffing Patterns and Budget. This part addresses administrative aspects of the program that do not involve contact with students, but are essential in maintaining the administrative and structural integrity of the overall program.

The **programmatic** part has four components: Guidance Curriculum, Individual Planning, Responsive Services, and System Support. The Guidance Curriculum consists of structured developmental experiences presented systematically through classroom activities, to provide students with knowledge of normal growth and development and to promote good mental health and assist them in acquiring life skills. The curriculum is organized around (1) career planning and exploration; (2) knowledge of self and others; and (3) educational development.

The Individual Planning component consists of activities that help all students set goals, plan, and manage their own learning, as well as their personal and career development. Conversely, the Responsive Services component consists of activities to meet students' immediate needs and concerns, whether these require counseling, consultation, referral, or information.

The System Support component consists of management activities that establish, maintain, and enhance the guidance program as a whole through professional development, staff and community relations, consultation with teachers, advisory councils, community outreach, program management, and research and development.

What Is the Content of the Comprehensive Guidance Program Model?

The Comprehensive Guidance Program Model is predicated on the concept of life career development, defined as self-development through the integration of roles, settings, and events in a person's life (Gysbers & Moore, 1975). (The concept of "career" refers to one's whole life, and not just occupation.) The program emphasizes three domains of human growth in life career development: self-knowledge and interpersonal skills; life roles, settings, and events; and life career planning.

In the self-knowledge and interpersonal skills domain, the focus is on helping students to understand and accept themselves and others, and to become aware of their personal characteristics—interests, aspirations, and abilities. Through learning about the interactive relationship of self and environment, they learn how to create and maintain relationships, and they develop personal standards and a sense of purpose in life.

The second domain emphasizes various life roles (learner, citizen, consumer), settings (home, school, work, and community), and events (job entry, marriage, retirement) in which students participate over their life span. This domain focuses on the sociological, psychological, and economic structure of their world, and encourages students to overcome stereotypes and plan for the future.

The Life Career Planning domain is designed to help students understand that decision making and planning are important tasks in everyday life. Students learn of the many occupations and industries in the work world. Students also develop skills in gathering information from relevant sources and using that information to make reasoned decisions. Students are also encouraged to assess their personal values as these relate to prospective plans and decisions.

Who Should Be Involved in the Program?

Counselors, teachers, administrators, parents, students, community members, and business and labor personnel all have roles to play as human resources in the guidance program. While counselors provide the services and

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coordinate the program, they must enlist the involvement, cooperation, and support of teachers and administrators for the program to be successful, for the program is predicated on an assumption that guidance is central to the educational process. To involve parents, community members, and business and labor personnel, a school-community advisory committee can be formed to provide recommendations and support services to counselors and others involved in the program.

The involvement of the teaching staff is critical, so teachers should have the opportunity to volunteer for active participation in program planning and implementation. Counselors and teachers should work together to plan the delivery of the guidance curriculum, so that guidance learning activities are presented in the appropriate content areas, and so that teachers do not feel displaced by counselors in the classroom.

What Facilities Are Needed?

Furthermore, to make the guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support components function effectively, the program requires a new way to organize guidance program facilities. Besides the usual individual offices for one-to-one counseling sessions, the program requires reorganization of space into a guidance center, which brings together guidance information and resources and makes them accessible to students. Such a center could also be used for such activities as group sessions and self-exploration. The guidance center could also include a library and/or computerized database, providing advice and materials for career planning, educational opportunities, community involvement, and recreational opportunities.

How Can Schools Best Implement a Comprehensive Guidance Program?

Step 1. Sell the model to the counselors in the department, since those participating in it must feel some ownership. According to Gloria Morgan, who has implemented the Missouri model in two high schools, approximately three years is needed to implement a comprehensive guidance program (Gysbers, 1990). Because many counselors and administrators resist change, it is essential to lay the groundwork for implementation by thoroughly discussing the program in advance with all affected staff members.

Step 2. Develop an inservice workshop for teachers, so that faculty will understand and support the purposes of the Comprehensive Guidance Program.

Step 3. Launch a public relations program to inform students, parents, and the community about proposed changes in the guidance program. This can be done through workshops, talks at local civic groups, newspaper articles, and even local television spots.

Step 4. Conduct a thorough assessment of the current guidance program, including available resources, both human and financial. This means evaluating the time and task allocation of the counseling staff, and taking inventory of materials.

Step 5. Conduct a needs assessment, including a survey of students, parents, and teachers, in order to help counselors identify important program categories and competencies in the three major areas around which the guidance curriculum is organized: career planning and exploration, knowledge of self and others, and educational and vocational development. The self-assessment and needs evaluation both provide baseline information to use in designing the new program along the lines of the model, but in a way that addresses the needs of each school.

Step 6. Develop the guidance curriculum, introducing specific competencies sequentially. In the initial planning stages of the curriculum, it is best to concentrate on cooperative departments and teachers, and to plan the entire year's curriculum in advance, if possible. The guidance curriculum is usually the most difficult part of the program to implement, because it must fit in with existing curricular constraints, and must overcome the reluctance of teachers to give up class time or to alter and supplement their existing instructional plans. It is thus essential to seek administrative support, be well organized, and give teachers as much advance notice as possible.

Step 7. Establish a coherent annual evaluation procedure that assesses attainment of student competencies, personnel performance, and the achievement of program goals.

In Summary

According to Gysbers and Henderson (1988), the Comprehensive Guidance Model is intended, above all, to lead to guidance activities and structured group experiences for all students, and to de-emphasize administrative, clerical tasks, reliance on reactive personal counseling, and limited accountability. To fully implement the model program, it is essential that all constituencies understand the following characteristics:

- that the program is oriented toward overall student development, rather than ad hoc crisis management;
- that the four programmatic components constitute 100% of the counselor's activities, with no add-ons;
- that guidance is an integral part of the overall curriculum, and not an ancillary service;
- that the focus is on the program, rather than the counselor's position, and on education, rather than clinical or agency-based assistance.

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Mixed-Age Groups in Early Childhood Education

Demetra Evangelou

The practice of educating children in mixed-age groups in early childhood education, including the primary grades, has a long history. Mixed-age grouping has also been known as *heterogeneous, multi-age, vertical, ungraded* or *nongraded*, and *family grouping*. Cross-age tutoring is another method of altering traditional ways of grouping children in their early years.

If current trends in maternal employment continue, increasing numbers of young children will spend larger proportions of their preschool years in care outside of their homes (Katz, 1988). Young children who are cared for at home are unlikely to spend large amounts of time in groups of children of the same age. Natural family units are typically heterogeneous in age. The family group provides all members with the opportunity to observe, emulate and initiate a wide range of competencies.

It is assumed that the wider the range of competencies manifested in a mixed-age group, the greater the opportunities for group members to develop relationships and friendships with others who match, complement, or supplement the participants' own needs and styles. The greater diversity of maturity and competence present in a mixed-age group, as compared to a same-age group, provides a sufficient number of models to allow most participants to identify models suitable for their learning.

Given that spontaneously formed peer groups are typically heterogeneous in composition, the separation of children into same-age groups in early childhood education settings is questionable. This grouping practice is based on the assumption that chronological age is the single most reliable developmental index. This assumption has led to the extensive screening and testing related to kindergarten entrance. But developmental indexes other than chronological age—indexes such as social, emotional, and cognitive level of maturity—can be used.

Advantages of Mixed-Age Classes

In mixed-age classes, it may be easier for kindergarten and preschool teachers to resist the "push-down" tendency—the trend to introduce the primary school curriculum into kindergarten and preschool classes (Gallagher & Coche, 1987). Because mixed-age grouping invites cooperation and other prosocial behaviors, the discipline problems of competitive environments can often be minimized.

A mixture of ages within a class can be particularly desirable for children functioning below age group norms in some areas of their development. These children may find it less stressful to interact with younger peers than with same-age peers. Such interactions can enhance younger children's motivation and self-confidence.

Social Development in Mixed-Age Groups

Prosocial behaviors are often treated as indices of social development. Prosocial behaviors such as help-giving, sharing, and turn-taking facilitate interaction and promote socialization. Social perceptions also play an important role in the development of social competence. They are an essential part of a child's increasing social awareness. The formation of friendships is often based on a child's perceptions of the roles of peers in a variety of social contexts.

Research evidence suggests that children of different ages are usually aware of differences and attributes associated with age. Consequently, both younger and older children in mixed-age groups differentiate their expectations depending on the ages of the participants. Interaction in mixed-age groups elicits prosocial behaviors that are important in the social development of the young child.

A number of studies indicate that mixed-age grouping can provide remedial benefits for at-risk children. For example, it has been established that children are more likely to exhibit prosocial behaviors (Whiting, 1983) and offer instruction (Ludeke & Hartup, 1983) to younger peers than to age-mates. Children are also more likely to establish friendships (Hartup, 1976) and exhibit aggression with age-mates, and to display dependency with older children. The availability of younger and therefore less threatening peers in mixed-age groups offers the possibility of remedial effects for children whose social development is at risk.

Cognitive Development in Mixed-age Groups

Research suggests that the effect of mixed-age grouping on cognition is likely to derive from the cognitive conflict arising from children's interaction with peers of different levels of cognitive maturity. In their discussion of cognitive conflict, Brown and Palinscar (1986) make the point that the contribution of such cognitive conflict to learning is not simply that the less-informed child imitates the more knowledgeable one. The interaction between the children leads the less-informed member to internalize new understandings.

Along the same lines, Vygotsky (1978) maintains that the internalization of new understandings, or *cognitive restructuring*, occurs when concepts are actually transformed and not merely replicated. According to Vygotsky, internalization takes place when children interact within the "zone of proximal development." Vygotsky (1978) defines this zone as "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p.86).

Slavin (1987) suggests that in terms of the Vygotskian concept of the "zone of proximal development," the discrepancy between what an individual can do with and without assistance can be the basis for cooperative peer efforts that result in cognitive gains. In Slavin's view, "collaborative activity among children promotes growth because children of similar ages are likely to be operating within one another's zones of proximal development, modeling in the collaborating group behaviors more advanced than those they could perform as individuals" (p. 1162). Brown and Reeve (1985) maintain that instruction aimed at a wide range of abilities allows the novice to learn at his own rate and to manage various cognitive challenges in the presence of "experts."

Implications for Early Childhood Education

Mixed-age interaction among young children can offer a variety of developmental benefits to all participants. However, this is not to suggest that merely mixing children of different ages in a group will guarantee that the benefits mentioned earlier will be realized. Before grouping, one must consider the optimum age range, the proportion of older to younger children, the allocation of time to the mixed-age group and the curriculum and teaching strategies that will maximize the educational benefits for the group. The empirical data on the educational principles that should guide instruction in mixed-age environments are not yet available. When the data become available, they should support the position that mixed-age group interaction can have unique adaptive, facilitating and enriching effects on children's development.

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The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

by Ina V.S. Mullis, NAEP, Educational Testing Service

Since 1969, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has been assessing what public and private school students know and can do in a variety of curriculum areas, including mathematics, reading, science, writing, U.S. history, and geography. In 1988, Congress added a new dimension to NAEP by authorizing, on a trial basis, voluntary participation in state-level assessments in 1990 and 1992. With the President's Summit on Education, the resultant education goals, and the addition of the state assessment program, NAEP is playing an increasingly visible role in measuring student achievement.

This digest describes how NAEP is organized and what is included in a typical NAEP assessment. It also looks at how NAEP selects students for its assessments and how the results from an assessment are used.

How Is NAEP Organized and Managed?

NAEP is a congressionally-mandated project of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education. NCES carries out the NAEP project through competitive awards to qualified organizations. NCES awarded the operational contract for conducting the 1990 and 1992 assessments to Educational Testing Service (ETS) -- who is responsible for printing, open-ended scoring, and scanning -- and its subcontractor, Westat, Inc. -- who is responsible for data collection. In addition to coordinating operational activities, ETS develops the assessment instruments, analyzes the assessment results, and works with NCES staff to prepare the reports on student achievement.

The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) formulates policy guidelines for NAEP. NAGB's composition is specified by law, and its 24 members include teachers, curriculum specialists, state legislators, governors, measurement experts, chief state school officers, state and local school board members, school superintendents, principals, and representatives from business and the general public.

NAGB selects the subject areas to be assessed, in addition to those specified by Congress; develops assessment objectives and specifications; ensures that all NAEP items are free from racial, gender, or cultural bias; and identifies appropriate achievement goals for students. NAGB also awards contracts for technical advice. For example, NAGB awarded a contract to the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to manage the consensus process to develop NAEP's 1992 reading objectives and item specifications.

What Is Covered in a Typical NAEP Assessment?

The NAEP objectives underlying each assessment typically take the form of frameworks or matrices delineating the important content and process areas to be assessed. For example:

- **The mathematics framework** is a five by three matrix specifying five content areas -- Numbers and Operations; Measurement; Geometry; Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability; and Algebra and Functions -- and three process or ability areas -- conceptual understanding, procedural knowledge, and problem solving.
- **The reading framework** includes reading for three primary purposes -- for literary experience, for information, and for performing a task. The process dimension includes fluency, constructing meaning (forming an initial understanding of the text and developing an interpretation of it), and elaborating and responding critically (reflecting on and responding to the text as well as demonstrating a critical stance).

As part of the legislatively-mandated consensus process used to regularly update NAEP objectives and item specifications, the contractors hired by NAEP indicate the percentages of assessment items that should be devoted to measuring various aspects of the frameworks. For more recent assessments, recommendations have emphasized measuring higher order skills and understandings.

The assessment instruments, which are generally administered in group settings, include a variety of multiple-choice and open-ended items. Here is a sample of the tasks the students perform:

- During the **mathematics assessment**, students are allowed to use calculators and protractors or rulers, and the instrument asks for open-ended responses to complex problems.
- The **reading assessment** will break new ground by presenting longer, naturally occurring passages and increasing the proportion of open-ended questions to fill nearly half of the assessment. Using the Integrated Reading Performance Record, NAEP will also assess fluency in oral reading and will conduct a portfolio study based on interviews of individual fourth-grade students.
- Based entirely on student writing samples, the **writing assessment** includes a variety of prompts addressing different purposes for writing. Students' responses are evaluated for task accomplishment, overall fluency, and mechanical correctness.
- The **science assessment** includes a variety of open-ended questions, some of which ask students to describe their conceptions of scientific inquiry and to draw conclusions about scientific phenomena and events.

How Are Students Selected for Participation in NAEP?

In 1990, approximately 87,000 students participated in the national assessment and another 100,000 participated in the state assessments of eighth grade mathematics. Considering the planned expansion of the state assessment program, NAEP anticipates that in 1992 the assessments will involve approximately 419,000 students in 12,000 schools.

The details of the sampling procedures for the national and state assessments differ in the following respects:

- For the national assessment, NAEP uses a four-stage sampling design: (1) primary sampling units are identified; (2) schools are enumerated within the primary sampling units and randomly selected; (3) students are randomly selected from those schools; (4) those students are assigned to assessments in different subject areas.
- For the state assessments, the schools in each state are enumerated, stratified, and randomly selected; then, students are listed and randomly selected, and assigned to assessment sessions.

How Does NAEP Reduce the Burden on Participating Schools and Students?

All NAEP data are collected by trained administrators. For the national assessments, Westat, Inc. trains its own field staff to collect the data, thus reducing the burden on participating schools. However, according to the NAEP legislation, each participating state must collect data for the trial state assessments. Westat achieves uniformity of procedures across states through training and quality-control monitoring.

NAEP uses matrix sampling to reduce the burden for participating students. In matrix sampling, the total pool of assessment questions is divided, and portions are given to different but equivalent samples of students. Thus, not all students are asked to answer all questions. This system provides broad coverage of each curriculum area being assessed, while each student invests only about an hour in the assessment.

How Are NAEP Results Analyzed and Reported?

NAEP results are known as The Nation's Report Card. NAEP also publishes results in a series of widely-disseminated reports that summarize achievement across items and describe relationships between achievement and a variety of background characteristics. In addition, NAEP provides information about the percentage of students who give acceptable responses to each item.

NAEP objectives, reports, technical documentation, and complete publications lists are available from Educational Testing Service, P.O. Box 6710, Princeton, NJ 08541.

Additional Reading

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ERIC
Digest

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The Nature of Children's Play

David Fernie

In play, children expand their understanding of themselves and others, their knowledge of the physical world, and their ability to communicate with peers and adults. This digest discusses children's play and its relationship to developmental growth from infancy to middle childhood. The digest also suggests ways in which educators and other adults can support children's play.

Sensorimotor Play

In what Piaget (1962) aptly described as sensorimotor practice play, infants and toddlers experiment with bodily sensation and motor movements, and with objects and people. By 6 months of age, infants have developed simple but consistent action schemes through trial and error and much practice. Infants use action schemes, such as pushing and grasping, to make interesting things happen. An infant will push a ball and make it roll in order to experience the sensation and pleasure of movement.

As children master new motor abilities, simple schemes are coordinated to create more complex play sequences. Older infants will push a ball, crawl after it, and retrieve it. When infants of 9 months are given an array of objects, they apply the same limited actions to all objects and see how they react. By pushing various objects, an infant learns that a ball rolls away, a mobile spins, and a rattle makes noise. At about 12 months, objects bring forth more specific and differentiated actions. At this age, children will throw or kick a ball, but will shake rattles.

In a toddler's second year, there is growing awareness of the functions of objects in the social world. The toddler puts a cup on a saucer and a spoon in her mouth. During the last half of this year, toddlers begin to represent their world symbolically as they transform and invent objects and roles. They may stir an imaginary drink and offer it to someone (Bergen, 1988). Adults initiate and support such play. They may push a baby on a swing or cheer its first awkward steps. Children's responses regulate the adult's actions. If the swing is pushed too high, a child's cries will guide the adult toward a gentler approach. In interactions with adults such as peekaboo, children learn to take turns, act with others, and engage others in play.

Pretend Play

As children develop the ability to represent experience symbolically, pretend play becomes a prominent activity. In this complex type of play, children carry out action plans, take on roles, and transform objects as they express their ideas and feelings about the social world (Garvey, 1984).

Action plans are blueprints for the ways in which actions and events are related and sequenced. Family-related themes in action plans are popular with young children, as are action plans for treating and healing and for averting threats.

Roles are indentities children assume in play. Some roles are functional: necessary for a certain theme. For example, taking a trip requires passengers and a driver. Family roles such as mother, father and baby are popular, and are integrated into elaborate play with themes related to familiar home activities. Children also assume stereotyped character roles drawn from the larger culture, such as nurse, and fictional character roles drawn from books and television, such as He-Man. Play related to these roles tends to be more predictable and restricted than play related to direct experiences such as family life (Garvey, 1984).

As sociodramatic play emerges, objects begin to influence the roles children assume. For example, household implements trigger family-related roles and action plans, but capes stimulate superhero play. Perceptually bound younger children may be aided by the provision of realistic objects (Fein, 1981). Even three-year-olds can invent and transform objects to conform to plans.

By the age of four or five, children's ideas about the social world initiate most pretend play. While some pretend play is solitary or shared with adults, preschoolers' pretend or sociodramatic play is often shared with peers in the school or neighborhood. To implement and maintain pretend play episodes, a great deal of shared meaning must be negotiated among children. Play procedures may be talked about explicitly, or signaled subtly in role-appropriate action or dialogue. Players often make rule-like statements to guide behavior ("You have to finish your dinner, baby").

Potential conflicts are negotiated. Though meanings in play often reflect real world behavior, they also incorporate children's interpretations and wishes. The child in a role who orders a steak and piece of candy from a pretend menu is not directly copying anything he has seen before.

Construction play with symbolic themes is also popular with preschoolers, who use blocks and miniature cars and people to create model situations related to their experience.

A kind of play with motion, rough and tumble play, is popular in preschool years. In this play, groups of children run, jump, and wrestle. Action patterns call for these behaviors to be performed at a high pitch. Adults may worry that such play will become aggressive, and they should probably monitor it. Children who participate in this play become skilled in their movements, distinguish between real and feigned aggression, and learn to regulate each other's activity (Garvey, 1984).

Games with Rules

Children become interested in formal games with peers by age five or younger. Older children's more logical and socialized ways of thinking make it possible for them to play games together. Games with rules are the most prominent form of play during middle childhood (Piaget, 1962).

The main organizing element in game play consists of explicit rules which guide children's group behavior. Game play is very organized in comparison to sociodramatic play. Games usually involve two or more sides, competition, and agreed-upon criteria for determining a winner. Children use games flexibly to meet social and intellectual needs. For example, choosing sides may affirm friendship and a pecking order. Games provide children with shared activities and goals. Children often negotiate rules in order to create the game they wish to play (King, 1986). They can learn reasoning strategies and skills from strategy games like checkers. In these games, children must consider at the same time both offensive alternatives and the need for defense. Many card games encourage awareness of mathematics and of the psychology of opponents. Such games can be intellectually motivating parts of pre- and primary school curriculum (Kamii & DeVries, 1980, Kamii, 1985).

The Adult Role in Children's Play

These general guidelines may be helpful:

- *Value children's play and talk to children about their play.* Adults often say "I like the way you're working," but rarely, "I like the way you're playing."
- *Play with children when it is appropriate, especially during the early years.* If adults pay attention to and engage in children's play, children get the message that play is valuable.
- *Create a playful atmosphere.* It is important for adults to provide materials which children can explore and adapt in play.
- *When play appears to be stuck or unproductive, offer a new prop, suggest new roles, or provide new experiences, such as a field trip.*
- *Intervene to ensure safe play.* Even in older children's play, social conflicts often occur when children try to negotiate. Adults can help when children cannot solve these conflicts by themselves (Caldwell, 1977). Adults should identify play which has led to problems for particular children. They should check materials and equipment for safety. Finally, adults should make children aware of any hidden risks in physical challenges they set for themselves.

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THE NINTH GRADE—A PRECARIOUS TIME FOR THE POTENTIAL DROPOUT

The ninth grade is difficult for most students, and can be devastating for those who are anyway at risk. Not only are ninth grade students at an uncomfortable stage of adolescence, but the first year of high school demands a new degree of academic seriousness. Since high school graduation depends almost entirely on earning a specific number of credits, there are suddenly less flexible rules for promotion or retention. Moreover, the ninth grade traditionally is heavy with required courses.

The difficulty of the ninth grade is often increased in school districts where ninth graders are the youngest in a four-year senior high school. Older students can intimidate and tease, as well as offer both temptations and dangers in the form of gangs, drugs, and sex. For example, after ninth graders were integrated into a Seattle high school, changing it from a three- to a four-year school, the ninth grade students showed a marked increase in both absenteeism and dropping out over the next three years.[1]

A rise in both academic failures and dropping out highlight the precariousness of the ninth grade. Statistics from the State of Georgia show that a fifth of all K-12 students who are not promoted, and a quarter of all K-12 dropouts, are ninth graders.[2] In a sample of 30 New York City high schools (which begin with the ninth grade), 40 percent of the ninth graders failed two or more of their courses.[3]

Who Is at Risk?

Not surprisingly, the difficulties of the transition effect most heavily students who already suffer from attendance, discipline, and academic problems—those already at risk to drop out. For these students, the new high school can offer proof that school is too trying or alien, and that they cannot succeed. Those who do drop out have usually been retained at least a year along the way and have been "simply waiting for their 16th birthday so that they can legitimately leave."[4]

Even for those students who don't leave school right away, the first year of high school can predict early school leaving. In the New York City sample of ninth graders, "at least half of the students who went on to drop out had entirely unsatisfactory first-term records: excessively absent, and failing all or nearly all of their course."[5]

Strategies for Holding Onto Ninth Graders

Over the last several years, often as part of dropout prevention programs, school districts have experimented with a number of strategies to alleviate the most obvious sources of trouble in the ninth grade. Some of these strategies demand restructuring for all ninth graders; others are aimed at small groups of students who may find the transition to high school particularly difficult:

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Improving articulation between the earlier years of schooling and high school. As the problems of a lack of coordination between the academic and behavioral demands of elementary, junior or middle school, and high school have become clear to administratorsin many school districts, administrators have made a number of attempts to create better coordination, such as:

- Meetings have been initiated between middle school and high school staff to improve curriculum planning, and middle school administrators have joined elementary and high school curriculum planning teams.
- Principals at all three levels have begun to visit schools at the other levels in their districts.
- Counseling programs are being coordinated to take into consideration changes in students as they mature, as well as changes in expectations of school staff.

Deferring required courses. Commonly, the majority of ninth grade courses are required for high school graduation. This means that students cannot take courses that might offer pleasure or relief, and a student who fails one or more courses can easily feel that his or her academic chances are over.

However, shifting some required courses upward to the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades gives ninth graders more room for electives, while at the same time providing upper class members with fuller and more challenging course loads.[6]

Decreasing alienation of the high school. Breaking down the large high school into small, stable units and ensuring personal attention can decrease alienation in the ninth grade.

- Students can be given *homeroom teachers* who also function as mentors and personal guides.
- Schedules can be modified, *extending class periods* and lessening the need for students to move from class to class every 50 or 60 minutes.
- Schools can create clusters of students who remain together through two or three subjects, in what is sometimes known as *block programming*. Several urban districts use block programs in the mornings and save the afternoons for cultural enrichment, work, internships, or counseling.[7]
- Special *alternative schools* and *mini-schools* can be created for students whose prior academic achievement, attendance and/or behavior indicate that they are disaffected. Newark, for example, runs an alternative school, Project Opportunity, for ninth grade repeaters who would otherwise be likely to drop out. Its key features are a more structured school day, smaller classes, more individualized instruction, a greater and more interdisciplinary focus on basic skills, and extensive family/school involvement.[8]

Sensitizing teachers. All teachers can be made more sensitive to the problems of ninth graders. Schools can give their best and most experienced teachers the ninth grade assignments, rather than their newest and least experienced teachers, as is commonly the case.

Creating alternatives to retention before the ninth grade. Although retention in the early grades may give an immature student time to mature,[9] it more often results in stigma, low esteem, and waning motivation,[10] without offering any significant long- or short-term gains.[11] In fact, some feel that being overage appears to exacerbate the tendency of at risk students to drop out.[12]

Alternatives to retention in the early grades can allow students to learn new material at their needed pace. In the middle school years, programs can be created that help seventh grade students who should be in the ninth grade to complete three years' work in two years.

The Hartford Public School Systems runs Project Bridge for seventh grade students whose average age is 16, and who are likely candidates for dropping out. The program includes an intensive academic program that lasts two school years, as well as a six-week summer remediation and work program.[13]

Special programs to orient middle school students to high school. Many school districts that have a middle school/high school configuration have begun to provide a variety of programs to smooth the passage from eighth grade to high school.[14] To ensure that students receive the benefit of these programs, some school districts have stopped their policy of allowing students to enter the ninth grade mid-year.

- *After-school activities* can be offered at the high school for eighth grade school students.
- Small groups of middle school students can be taken on *visits to high schools* to meet faculty, tour the building, receive a general orientation, and possibly be assigned a high school student mentor.
- *Shadowing*, in which a middle school student follows a high school student throughout part or all of the school day, can acquaint students with what their high school days will be like.
- *Orientation programs* can be created for incoming students that may run from as little as the first day of high school, to one day a month, or even the entire semester. In Seattle, orientation takes the form of a semester-long course for all entering ninth graders whose title, "Route 19XX", denotes the year they will graduate. Classes are small, and topics include expectations and rules for academic and social behavior, possible courses of study, school organization and tradition, self-awareness, multicultural human relations,

decision-making about drugs, study skills, and career planning. Since the program's inception, a 22-28 percent dropout rate has been reduced to 12 percent.[15]

- *Orientation programs for parents* can parallel those for the students, so that parents can be actively involved in the students' progress through high school.

In one school district, monthly programs during the freshman year get parents involved as chaperones, on an advisory committee, and in various projects that culminate in graduation. Parents become well informed about the grading system and strategies for remediation, as well as about courses of study and the timing of preparation for various college or career plans.[16]

- *Upper class students* can also be worked with, in meetings of the student body, in clubs, and in small groups to decrease intimidation and to create a greater receptivity toward the incoming ninth graders.

Easing the Transition—a Multiple Approach

Although going from middle or junior high school to high school cannot be entirely without stress even for the good student, a number of approaches, either alone, or in combination, can help the at risk student. Currently, districts around the country have implemented such strategies as creating social linkages, ensuring academic articulation, deferring required courses, creating block programs, sensitizing teachers, and creating alternatives to retention all ease the transition for students without requiring vast changes in the basic structure of the high school.

—Carol Ascher

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NURTURING GIFTEDNESS IN YOUNG CHILDREN

Versions of the following conversation can often be heard when young gifted children start school. "Bill doesn't belong in kindergarten!" the parent cries. "Look, he's reading at the fourth grade level and has already learned two-column addition." The teacher or principal, having already decided this is a "pushy parent," replies, "Well, Mrs. Smith, Bill certainly doesn't belong in first grade; he hasn't learned to tie his shoelaces, and he can't hold a pencil properly, and he had a tantrum yesterday in the hall."

The problem in this continuing controversy is that both parties are usually correct. Some gifted children entering kindergarten have acquired academic skills far beyond those of their age mates. Such children master the academic content of kindergarten when they are 3 years old. However, their physical and social development may be similar to that of other 5 year olds, making an accelerated placement a mismatch as well. The usual solution is to place a child like Bill in a program matched to his weaknesses, rather than his strengths. Bill usually ends up in kindergarten, where his advanced intellectual development becomes a frustration to his teacher, an embarrassment to his peers, and a burden to Bill.

Educators justify this placement by saying, "Bill needs socialization; he's already so far ahead academically, he doesn't need anything in that area." There are two major problems with this rationale. First, educators are essentially telling such students that there is no need for them to learn anything in school. The second problem is revealed by examining the so-called socialization experienced by a brilliant 5-year-old like Bill in a kindergarten class of 25 to 30 students. A major component of early socialization involves a child's feeling that she or he is accepted by others—teachers and children alike. If the teacher does not validate a gifted child's advanced abilities and intellectual interests by making them part of the ongoing curriculum, the child experiences no feelings of acceptance from the teacher. If, as is highly likely, this child makes the additional discovery that she or he is quite different from most classmates and that communication is extremely difficult because of differences in vocabulary and modes of expression, then the child misses peer acceptance as well. In fact, this first school experience, which should furnish the impetus for future enthusiasm about learning, can be a dismal failure for the brilliant child in a lockstep kindergarten program. Often these children learn to hide or deny their abilities so as to fit in better with the other children. Or, they may develop behavioral problems or pychosomatic symptoms such as stomachaches and headaches, causing parents to confront the school with justifiable concern.

Understanding Uneven Development

It is important to remember that these children very often do not develop evenly. In fact, young gifted children frequently show peaks of extraordinary performance rather than equally high skill levels in all cognitive areas. The child who learns to read at age 3 or who shows unusually advanced spatial reasoning ability, for example, may not be the child with the highest IQ or the earliest language development. Unique patterns of development can be observed within a group of gifted children, and uneven development is frequently evident in the pattern of a single child. In some cases, it seems as though children's abilities develop in spurts, guided by changes in interest and opportunity. Reading ability, for example, might develop almost overnight. Children who know all their letters and letter sounds by age 2 1/2 may remain at that level for some time, perhaps until age 4 or 5, and then in a matter of months develop fluent reading skills at the third or fourth grade level.

Another area of unevenness in the development of gifted young children is found in the relationship between advanced intellectual development and development of physical and social skills. Evidence seems to indicate that intellectually gifted children's performance in the physical domain may only be advanced to the extent that the physical tasks involve cognitive organization. And, although intellectually advanced children tend to possess some advanced social-cognitive skills, they do not necessarily demonstrate those skills in their social behavior. In other words, they may understand how to solve social conflicts and interact cooperatively but not know how to translate their understanding into concrete behavior.

It is not uncommon to find gifted young children experiencing a vast gap between their advanced intellectual skills and their less advanced physical and emotional competencies. For example, 4- and 5-year-old children may converse intelligently about abstract concepts such as time and death and read fluently at the fourth grade level, yet find it difficult to hold a pencil or share their toys with others.

Often these uneven developmental levels can lead to extreme frustration, as children find that their limited physical skills are not sufficiently developed to carry out the complex projects they imagined. These children may throw tantrums or even give up on projects without trying. Adult guidance in developing coping strategies can help such children set more realistic goals for themselves and learn how to solve problems effectively when their original efforts do not meet their high expectations.

Adults, too, can be misled by children's advanced verbal ability or reasoning skill into expecting equally advanced behavior in all other areas. It is unsettling to hold a high-level conversation with a 5 year old who then turns around and punches a classmate who stole her pencil. Sometimes young children's age-appropriate social behavior is interpreted as willful or lazy by parents and teachers whose expectations are unrealistically high. The only accurate generalization that can be made about the characteristics of intellectually gifted young children is that they demonstrate their unusual intellectual skills in a wide variety of ways and that they form an extremely heterogeneous group with respect to interests, skill levels in particular areas, social development, and physical abilities.

Understanding the unique developmental patterns often present in gifted young children can help both parents and teachers adjust their expectations of academic performance to a more reasonable level.

Choosing a Program or School

One of the few psychological truths educators and psychologists agree on is that the most learning occurs when an optimal match between the learner's current understanding and the challenge of new learning material has been carefully engineered. Choosing a program or school for a gifted child who masters ideas and concepts quickly but behaves like a typical 4- or 5-year-old child is indeed a challenge.

Many intellectually gifted children master the cognitive content of most preschool and kindergarten programs quite early. They come to school ready and eager to learn concepts not usually taught until an older age. However, academic tasks designed for older children often require the learner to carry out teacher-directed activities while sitting still and concentrating on written worksheets. Young children, no matter how bright they are, require active involvement with learning materials and often do not have the writing skills required for above-grade-level work.

Since many gifted children will hide their abilities in order to fit in more closely with classmates in a regular program, teachers may not be able to observe advanced intellectual or academic abilities directly. If a kindergartner enters school with fluent reading ability, the parent should share this information at the beginning of the year instead of waiting until the end of the year to complain that the teacher did not find out that the child could read. When parents and teachers pool their observations of a child's skills, they begin to work together to develop appropriate educational options for nurturing those abilities. Parents whose children have some unusual characteristics that will affect their learning needs have an obligation to share that information with educators, just as educators have an obligation to listen carefully to parent concerns.

When the entry level of learners is generally high but extremely diverse, an appropriate program must be highly individualized. Children should be encouraged to progress at their own learning rate, which will result in most cases in subject matter acceleration. The program should be broadly based, with planned opportunities for development of social, physical, and cognitive skills in the informal atmosphere of an early childhood classroom.

One primary task of teachers is to make appropriately advanced content accessible to young children, taking into account individual social and physical skills. Lessons can be broken into short units, activities presented as games, and many concepts taught through inquiry-oriented dialogue and experimentation with manipulatable materials. Language experience activities in reading and the use of manipulatable mathematics materials, as described in products such as *Mathematics Their Way* (Baratta-Lorton, 1976), are good examples of appropriate curriculum approaches.

An appropriate learning environment should also offer a gifted young child the opportunity to discover true peers at an early age. Parents of gifted children frequently find that, while their child can get along with other children in the neighborhood, an intense friendship is likely to develop with a more developmentally equal peer met in a special class or interest-based activity. Such parents may be dismayed to discover that this best friend does not live next door but across town, and they may wonder whether or not to give in to their child's pleas for inconvenient visits. Probably one of the most supportive activities a parent can engage in is to help a child find a true friend and make the effort required to permit the friendship to flower.

In looking for an appropriate program for their gifted preschooler, then, parents must be aware of the learning needs of young children and not be misled by so-called experts who advocate rigid academic approaches with an emphasis on rote memorization and repetition. Rather, wise parents will look for open-endedness, flexible grouping, and opportunities for advanced activities in a program that allows their child to learn in the company of intellectual peers.

Resources

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ERIC DIGEST
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OUTDOOR EDUCATION
EDO-RC-88-13

OUTDOOR CENTERS AND CAMPS:
A 'Natural' Location for Youth Leadership Development

I. Why Leadership and the Outdoors?

For years camps and outdoor programs have served as laboratories for youth leadership development. Young people have typically been placed in roles where they are called on to initiate projects, supervise camp activities, or take charge of groups of people. Most outdoor programs depend on young people to assume key leadership roles in their organizations.

This staff development pattern has been augmented in recent years by efforts to transform camps into leadership education settings where not only the junior staff, but the entire outdoor community, is intent on developing leadership capacities. This digest offers a framework for designing youth leadership programs which employ an outdoor setting as a "leadership classroom." Camp leaders, outdoor experiential educators, school and college faculty or youth agency staff who are interested in nurturing youth leaders and who see a role for outdoor settings in the process should find this digest useful.

II. Born in the U.S.A.: What is there to live for?

Growing up has never been easy and in recent years the transition to adulthood has become even more problematic. Gone are the classic agrarian patterns of apprenticeship and mentoring by adults which led to a series of intermediate jobs and, finally, a career track.

Instead of moving steadily to full adult responsibilities, many young adults are caught in an isolated, relatively unproductive period of life where little is expected of them except to prepare for the next, more useful stage. Moreover, instead of viewing adults as essential allies in their journey, older people are often perceived as judgmental and non-accepting barriers to progress. A 1985 Minnesota Youth Poll which sought opinions from over 2,000 high school students throughout Minnesota revealed that over 66% felt adults had a negative view of them. The study was replicated in the Chicago area where nearly identical results were obtained.

Society has responded to the alienation of modern youth by focusing almost exclusively on the fallout: drug use, dropouts, unwanted pregnancy, suicide, and crime. Massive resources have been mobilized to deal with the "problem" of youth. This medical model of responding to the illness rather than creating a proactive climate of wellness for youth has become dominant over the past 30 years and successes have been few.

Although not the prevailing approach, there is a countervailing chorus supporting "positive youth development" as a means of engaging alienated youth. Key to this model is the need to treat young people as resources and leaders in the community rather than as afflictions requiring treatment. Young people, in this approach, are asked to serve on community boards, to design service projects, and to play a more active role in the governance of their schools.

With interest growing in this style of youth development a demand has been created for leadership training to prepare youth for expanded community roles. Camps and outdoor programs are well positioned to play an increasingly important part in offering youth leadership programs appropriate to this newfound interest area.

III. Adult Leadership Development

Creating a youth leadership program in an outdoor setting requires some understanding of leadership theory. Unfortunately, most of the literature has been developed around business or military applications.

Leadership theorists typically categorize leaders on the basis of how they accomplish tasks and/or how they arrive at positions where they can perform the tasks. Some basic categories for leadership theory and their definitions are:

Trait Theory: Since leaders are presumed born to lead, leadership is assumed to involve building on existing strengths.

Situational Leadership: A popular approach now making the lecture circuit, situational leadership is matching different styles to differing settings.

Organizational Leadership: In this style, being a leader is related to a role in an organization. Position thus defines the leader.

Power: Leadership is assumed to be a function of power, of making things happen.

Ethical Assessment: Here, morals, ethics and reflection form the basis of leadership. Concern for the "good" of others is central to this understanding of leadership.

A typical leadership education course involves review of these leadership theories, personal assessment using instruments like the Myers-Briggs personality inventory, simulations or case studies, time for personal reflection,

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and opportunity for personal feedback.

Most adults who participate in leadership education are either already viewed as leaders or are slated to assume positions of responsibility. However, for young people entering a leadership course, there often is not the same sense of destiny or personal expectation. Granted, some young people view themselves as being able to make a contribution later in life, but few see themselves as valued current contributors to society. Leadership remains a distant, vague concept applicable perhaps to sports teams and school clubs, but not to larger contexts where it would be expected to make a difference.

Nothing less than a whole new way of viewing the world is required of young people if they are to break away from their stagnant assumptions into the acceptance of vital responsible roles where they can assume and exercise leadership. Camps and outdoor programs can become communities where this transformation can begin.

IV. Youth Leadership: A Transformation Process

Helping youth break out of self-imposed and socially reinforced restraints to active leadership roles requires a carefully designed educational process. Particular attention must be given to underrepresented groups such as people of color and women who, at an early age, are often "traced" away from leadership roles. These youth stand to gain particular benefit from leadership education as they confront barriers of race and gender and influence others in addressing these barriers.

COMMUNITY: At the heart of creating a youth leadership program in an outdoor setting is the shaping of a supportive community. Key elements are:

Staff. Staff should mirror the ethnic and gender diversity of the students. There is no more clear message to underrepresented groups than the example of staff with whom they can identify. Staff should also represent, through their life experience, a commitment to leadership in some area. Active, confident leaders whose character and skills exemplify the ideals of the program should operate the program. This is the key ingredient in building community.

Setting. An isolated camp or wilderness setting where distractions from the outside are minimal is ideal. The physical setting should represent a dramatic contrast from the everyday world in which young people live.

Scheduling. Intensity is more important than length of experience. Many effective residential program models are between 7 and 10 days in length. Length, however, is not the best predictor of program success, but rather the degree to which participants are fully engaged in the program is. The model of the 24-hour extended wilderness experience can be applied to the leadership camp setting through careful program design. Effective programs often go from dawn to dusk, with every element (morning conditioning to evening speakers) integrated to relate to the goals of the program. Learning theorists reinforce this emphasis, suggesting that degree of intrinsic motivation and involvement on the part of the student are the key variables in learning.

PROGRAM DESIGN: The National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC), a national non-profit organization dedicated to developing service-oriented youth leaders, has identified four key elements essential to a youth leadership development program in an outdoor setting. These elements form the core framework for curriculum development. Later, specific activity modules will be tied to the frame to complete a program design.

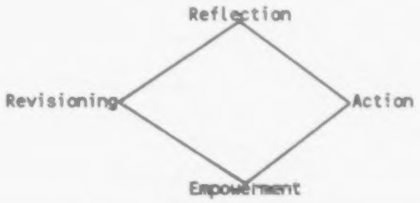
Revisioning. Young people must see themselves and be seen by adults as important contributors to community development--in contrast to how youth are seen today.

Empowerment. Young people must further begin to perceive themselves as powerful. This is accomplished through guided participation in acts of leadership, citizenship, and community service. When young people realize that they can make constructive impact upon the environment and others, it becomes possible for them to feel empowered. It is, after all, powerlessness, not power, which corrupts.

Action. Young people have not learned leadership until they have carried significant responsibility on their own. Once they are viewed as being able to lead and know that they are capable, they must enter the arena of leadership by initiating a project or by providing direction to a group.

Reflection. After engaging in an act of leadership, it should be judiciously processed or reflected upon. As John Dewey, one of America's foremost educational philosophers emphasized; "Learning is thinking about experience." Consolidation of learning through intentional reflective activity is essential if the understandings and competencies are to be transferred to other settings.

The Youth Leadership Cycle



PROGRAM COMPONENTS: The evolution of the NYLC Youth Leadership model began with analysis of contexts where young people have historically been called to lead: war, athletics, and the arts. All are settings demanding an element of stressful performance preceded by intense, directed training. Challenge--physical and/or intellectual--is central to each. Training is experiential or "hands on". Outcomes are clear and consequential.

Isolated, residential outdoor centers or camps are ideal for youth leadership training. Using the sequence suggested earlier, specific outdoor activities can be creatively blended into an effective youth leadership curriculum. Outlined are learning modules which have proved particularly successful in NYLC leadership training. Also indicated are the design elements the modules reflect.

Moral and Ethical Simulations [Revisioning, Empowerment, Action, Reflection] Moral dilemmas have a tendency to draw out leaders or challenge them to emerge.

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NYLC has created day long simulations using canoes and lengthy overland travel. Themes can be built in to add interest. An all-night adventure has been created, for example, to simulate Black people escaping the South and traveling the Underground Railroad during the 1850's. Everyone has a role and discussion gets hot after spending all night in the woods as slaves and slave catchers.

Leadership skills and moral decisionmaking can be fused in creative, life-like adventures that require young leaders to decide and act.

Adventure Challenge [Empowerment, Action] High level physical challenge activities, such as ropes courses, rock-climbing, and backpacking, have long been associated with personal development. They are particularly useful in a leadership course to help young people "see" themselves as capable and powerful. Special emphasis should be not only on encouraging youth to experience the adventure activity, but also to play a role in leading/facilitating others in the process. Students should be taught to belay fellow climbers, for example, as well as to rock-climb themselves.

Community Building [Revisioning, Empowerment, Action] Residential camps are ideal for creating intentional communities where democratic leadership processes can be used to develop a sense of community. Leadership courses should do more than talk "about" leadership, they should demonstrate it by sharing community responsibilities with young people.

Service Learning [Revisioning, Empowerment, Action, Reflection] Leadership and service should be thought of as cointentional goals in youth leadership development. Service sites are settings where leadership skills can be practiced. Service also becomes an ethical outcome, answering the question, "Leadership for what?" Camps have plenty of program possibilities for guided service projects. Physical projects can include trail construction, tree planting, and facility renovation. Often neglected, but very successful, are human service projects that use the leadership community as a base for ranging out into the communities surrounding the camp. Performing arts groups for example, have been sent out to conduct vaudeville shows for senior citizen centers or teams of youth have gone to homes of elderly people to do maintenance work.

It is essential to the concept of empowerment that young people perform powerful and meaningful activities such as these. Reflection on these acts helps young leaders begin to see themselves as valuable contributors to their own communities back home.

Performing Arts [Revisioning, Empowerment, Action] Performances can often be viewed as "light" entertainment for the camp scene. In a leadership course they should be taken seriously as important forms of expression that have strong potential impact upon the presentors and the audience. Roleplays on racism, cultural performances of dance and music, and street theatre with political themes have been very effective in leadership courses. Revisioning is encouraged through performance as young people become not only actors on the camp stage, but presentors of important ideas and themes. Art also brings many young people into an empowered new world of personal development--getting on stage can be analogous to standing on the edge of a 150 foot rappel.

Action Planning [Revisioning, Empowerment, Reflection] Secluded outdoor settings are ideal for making plans for application of leadership skills. NYLC and other leadership organizations culminate their courses with planning sessions which ask participants to envision projects they wish to take back home.

Action planning is a particularly effective reflection tool to help leadership students consolidate skills learned during the course. It is also empowering as young people come to realize that they are expected to do something authentic and that they are to be a part of the plan for the projects they will launch. As an outgrowth of action planning, empowered teams of leadership students have implemented projects to address the needs of homeless teens, refugee youth, the drug culture in their schools, and many other needs.

V. Youth Leadership: A New Challenge for Outdoor Education

As young people move toward maturity in our society, they want to be needed and respected for their skills and ability to contribute. Formal education has not been effective, by itself, in developing curricula that will prepare youth for active community participation.

Camps and outdoor settings over the years have proved to be ideal environments for developing leaders for the outdoors. The residential outdoor context is also appropriate as a classroom for developing leadership capacities that can be applied beyond the outdoor setting. Outdoor educators, in partnership with schools and community-based organizations, can play an important role in shaping this timely educational field. Youth leadership education requires an understanding of the social context of Western youth, effective employment of experiential education methods in outdoor settings, and a means of insuring that new leadership capacities are applied.

The most effective youth leadership projects combine an action-based, intensive outdoor experience with a continuum of community-based, follow-through activities. Caring adults working with youth at every stage are essential.

Research conducted at Pennsylvania State University and at the University of Minnesota suggests that programs designed to include the principles outlined in this digest can have a significant impact on the personal development and leadership capacities of young people.

The following list of programs employ all or a portion of the elements of youth leadership development mentioned.

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St. Paul, MN 55108
(612) 624-2719

-- Northeast Leadership Project
Peter Bailey
University Settlement

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New York, NY 10024
(212) 674-9120

-- International Youth Leadership Conference
Stuart Shepley
Bradford Woods
5040 St. Road 67 North
Martinsville, IN 46151
(317) 342-2915

-- Southwest Youth Leadership Project
Darl Kolb
Santa Fe Mountain Center
Rt. 4, Box 34C
Santa Fe, NM 87501
(505) 983-6158

-- Indian Youth Leadership Project
McClellan Hall
Box 96
Pine Hill, NM 87357
(505) 775-3366

-- Youth Leadership Council (Canada)
Jim Neale and Tony Richards
6230 South Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 1T8
(902) 424-1796

-- Khmer (Cambodian) Youth Leadership Project
Lheung Khi
Catholic Charities
Old Sixth St.
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 222-3001

East Bay Conservation Corps: Youth Leadership Project
Joanna Lennon
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California Conservation Corps Training Academy
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Youth Community Service, Constitutional Rights FDN
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American Youth Foundation
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Leadership America
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Dallas, TX 75219-5419
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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

An Overview of Self-Concept Theory for Counselors

After more than a decade of relative neglect, self concept is enjoying renewed popularity and attention by both researchers and practitioners. There is growing awareness that of all the perceptions we experience in the course of living, none has more profound significance than the perceptions we hold regarding our own personal existence -- our concept of who we are and how we fit into the world.

Self-concept may be defined as the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence. Self-concept is different from self-esteem (feelings of personal worth and level of satisfaction regarding one's self) or self-report (what a person is willing and able to disclose). Fromm (1956) was as beautifully clear as anyone when he described self-concept as "life being aware of itself."

Brief History of Self-Concept Theory

A milestone in human reflection about the non-physical inner self came in 1644, when Rene Descartes wrote *Principles of Philosophy*. Descartes proposed that doubt was a principal tool of disciplined inquiry, yet he could not doubt that he doubted. He reasoned that if he doubted, he was thinking, and therefore he must exist. Thus existence depended upon perception.

A second milestone in the development of self-concept theory was the writing of Sigmund Freud (1900) who gave us new understanding of the importance of internal mental processes. While Freud and many of his followers hesitated to make self-concept a primary psychological unit in their theories, Freud's daughter Anna (1946) gave central importance to ego development and self-interpretation.

Self-concept theory has always had a strong influence on the emerging profession of counseling. Prescott Lecky (1945) contributed the notion that self-consistency is a primary motivating force in human behavior. Raimy (1948) introduced measures of self-concept in counseling interviews and argued that psychotherapy is basically a process of altering the ways that individuals see themselves.

By far the most influential and eloquent voice in self-concept theory was that of Carl Rogers (1947) who introduced an entire system of helping built around the importance of the self. In Rogers' view, the self is *the* central ingredient in human personality and personal adjustment. Rogers described the self as a social product, developing out of interpersonal relationships and striving for consistency. He maintained that there is a basic human need for positive regard both from others and from oneself. He also believed that in every person there is a tendency towards self-actualization and development so long as this is permitted and encouraged by an inviting environment (Purkey & Schmidt, 1987).

While most self-concept theorists continued to write and conduct research during the 1970s and 1980s, general interest in self-concept declined. In a recent article explaining the likely causes for the decline of "humanistic" education, Patterson (1987) presents reasons for the decline of interest in self-concept as well. He offers four likely causes:

1. A cornucopia of contrived **games, gimmicks, and techniques** that were introduced and controlled by unprepared professionals.
2. A national mood of **"back to basics"** in education prevailed where concern for the emotional needs of students was viewed as inimical to academic excellence.
3. Poor judgment by counselors and teachers in selecting suitable materials for **values clarification programs** resulted in public opposition to any attempt to introduce values in school.
4. Strong opposition by those who objected to any consideration of personal development of students because they believed it to be **secular humanism** and, therefore, an effort to undermine religion.

Fortunately, there is a new awareness on the part of both the public and professionals that self-concept cannot be ignored if we are to successfully address such nagging problems as drug and alcohol abuse, drop-out rates, dysfunctional families, and other concerns. In addition to this growing awareness, new ways are being developed to strengthen self-concepts. For example, research by cognitive theorists (McAdam, 1986; Ryan, Short & Weed, 1986) are demonstating that negative self-talk leads to irrational thinking regarding oneself and the world.

Some Basic Assumptions Regarding Self-Concept

Many of the successes and failures that people experience in many areas of life are closely related to the ways that they have learned to view themselves and their relationships with others. It is also becoming clear that self-concept has at least three major qualities of interest to counselors: (1) it is learned, (2) it is organized, and (3) it is dynamic. Each of these qualities, with corollaries, follow.

Self-concept is learned. As far as we know, no one is born with a self-concept. It gradually emerges in the early months of life and is shaped and reshaped through repeated perceived experiences, particularly with significant others. The fact that self-concept is learned has some important implications:

- Because self-concept does not appear to be instinctive, but is a social product developed through experience, it possesses relatively boundless potential for development and actualization.

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- Because of previous experiences and present perceptions, individuals may perceive themselves in ways different from the ways others see them.
- Individuals perceive different aspects of themselves at different times with varying degrees of clarity. Therefore, inner focusing is a valuable tool for counseling.
- Any experience which is inconsistent with one's self-concept may be perceived as a threat, and the more of these experiences there are, the more rigidly self-concept is organized to maintain and protect itself. When a person is unable to get rid of perceived inconsistencies, emotional problems arise.
- Faulty thinking patterns, such as dichotomous reasoning (dividing everything in terms of opposites or extremes) or overgeneralizing (making sweeping conclusions based on little information) create negative interpretations of oneself.

Self-Concept Is Organized. Most researchers agree that self-concept has a generally stable quality that is characterized by orderliness and harmony. Each person maintains countless perceptions regarding one's personal existence, and each perception is orchestrated with all the others. It is this generally stable and organized quality of self-concept that gives consistency to the personality. This organized quality of self-concept has corollaries.

- Self-concept requires consistency, stability, and tends to resist change. If self-concept changed readily, the individual would lack a consistent and dependable personality.
- The more central a particular belief is to one's self-concept, the more resistant one is to changing that belief.
- At the heart of self-concept is the self-as-doer, the "I", which is distinct from the self-as-object, the various "me's." This allows the person to reflect on past events, analyze present perceptions, and shape future experiences.
- Basic perceptions of oneself are quite stable, so change takes time. Rome was not built in a day, and neither is self-concept.
- Perceived success and failure impact on self-concept. Failure in a highly regarded area lowers evaluations in all other areas as well. Success in a prized area raises evaluations in other seemingly unrelated areas.

Self-concept is dynamic. To understand the active nature of self-concept, it helps to imagine it as a gyrocompass: a continuously active system that dependably points to the "true North" of a person's perceived existence. This guidance system not only shapes the ways a person views oneself, others, and the world, but it also serves to direct action and enables each person to take a consistent "stance" in life. Rather than viewing self-concept as the *cause* of behavior, it is better understood as the gyrocompass of human personality, providing consistency in personality and direction for behavior. The dynamic quality of self-concept also carries corollaries.

- The world and the things in it are not just perceived; they are perceived in relation to one's self-concept.
- Self-concept development is a continuous process. In the healthy personality there is constant assimilation of new ideas and expulsion of old ideas throughout life.
- Individuals strive to behave in ways that are in keeping with their self-concepts, no matter how helpful or hurtful to oneself or others.
- Self-concept usually takes precedence over the physical body. Individuals will often sacrifice physical comfort and safety for emotional satisfaction.
- Self-concept continuously guards itself against loss of self-esteem, for it is this loss that produces feelings of anxiety.
- If self-concept must constantly defend itself from assault, growth opportunities are limited.

Summary

This brief overview of self-concept theory has focused on describing the ways people organize and interpret their inner world of personal existence. The beginnings of self-concept theory and its recent history have been discussed. Three major qualities of self-concept—that it is: (1) learned, (2) organized, and (3) dynamic—have been presented. Individuals have within themselves relatively boundless potential for developing a positive and realistic self-concept. This potential can be realized by people, places, policies, programs, and processes that are intentionally designed to invite the realization of this potential.

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Parent Education and Support Programs

Douglas R. Powell

Today there are numerous signs that the task of rearing competent children is becoming increasingly difficult. Dramatic changes in the structure and lifestyles of families and growing societal pressure for children to possess specific knowledge and skills at an early age are just two of the new and challenging conditions of parenthood. Conflicting research information sometimes results in conflicting advice for parents. Parents have always routinely sought the advice and help of relatives, friends and professionals. However, traditional sources of help—especially the extended family and neighborhood—are less available today than they were in the past.

Teachers and other human service professionals have long recognized the need to provide parents with child-rearing information and support. The formation of partnerships between parents and teachers that will foster children's development has been a persistent goal of most early childhood programs and elementary schools. In recent years, this goal has taken on increased importance as diverse segments of American society have recognized the need to help parents deal with the multiple pressures of rearing children in today's complex world. This digest describes current programmatic efforts to inform and support parents, and briefly reviews the research evidence on the effectiveness of parent education and support programs.

Approaches to Supporting Parents

The term *parent education* typically evokes the image of an expert lecturing a group of mothers about the ages and stages of child development. Yet a view of parent education and support as a staff-directed, didactic activity is neither a complete nor accurate portrayal of many programs of parent education and support. The concept of the parent education field has broadened considerably in the past two decades. At federal, state, and local levels, there are now a variety of ambitious and diverse initiatives aimed at supporting families with young children.

An important federal effort is the recent Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments (Public Law 99-457), which assist states in offering early intervention services for infants and toddlers and their families. The amendments call for a multidisciplinary team, which includes the parent or guardian, to develop an individualized family service plan that includes a statement of the family's strengths and needs in regards to enhancing the child's development. Services are to be aimed at the family system, not the child alone. This law strengthens the commitment to parent involvement set forth in Public Law 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.

Another federal effort, Head Start, has been this country's most extensive investment in the education of young children. Head Start has experimented with innovative strategies for involving families in program activities since its beginnings in 1965 (Zigler and Freedman, 1987).

State governments have been active in developing early childhood programs focused on families. One of the oldest state efforts is Minnesota's Early Childhood and Family Education Program. Founded in 1975, the program operates through local school districts to provide parent discussion groups, home visits, child development classes, and other approaches to enhancing and supporting parental competence. State-level initiatives designed to support families with young children have been established in a number of other states.

Local communities throughout the country have fostered the creation of a rapidly growing number of parent-oriented programs. These efforts, many of which have grassroots origins, range from drop-in center formats to peer self-help group methods. The Family Resource Coalition, based in Chicago, was founded in 1981 by many diverse community-based programs as a national organization for promoting the development of family resource programs.

The Effects of Parent Education and Support

Research on the effects of programs aimed at enhancing parents' child-rearing competence points to some promising patterns. Evaluations of intensive parent- or family-oriented early childhood programs serving low-income populations have found positive short-term effects on child competence and maternal behaviors, and long-term effects on such family characteristics as level of education, family size, and financial self-support (Powell, 1989). Other data suggest that the magnitude of program effects is associated with the number of program contacts with a family (Heinicke, Beckwith and Thompson, 1988) and the range of services offered to the family.

Little is known about effects of programs employing modest approaches to parent education and support, such as periodic lectures. Research on working- and middle-class populations is especially sparse.

Dimensions of a High-Quality Parent Program

The rapid growth of parent education and support programs leads to questions about what constitutes a high-quality program. Four program dimensions are proposed below on the basis of existing research and theory (see Powell, 1989).

1. It can be argued that high-quality programs are characterized by collaborative, equal relations between parents and program staff in which the intent is to empower parents in their child-rearing roles (Powell, 1988). It is increasingly suggested that program staff serve as facilitators of goals and activities jointly determined by parents and program staff, and not as experts who assume they know what is best for parents (Cochran, 1988). Illustrative of this approach is open-ended discussion of parent-initiated topics as opposed to a largely one-way flow of information from staff to parent. Collaborative parent-staff ties provide a means for ensuring that program methods and content are responsive to parents' needs.

2. Research data suggest that parent programs need to maintain a balanced focus on the needs of both parent and child. The content of parent programs has broadened in recent years to include significant attention to the social context of parenthood. This substantive shift reflects an interest in the interconnectedness of child, family, and community, and assumes that providing parents with social support in the form of helpful interpersonal relationships and material assistance (if needed) will enhance parent functioning and, ultimately, child development. Program efforts toward this end include the strengthening of parents' social networks, social support, and community ties as a buffer against stressful life circumstances and transitions. The term *parent support* is a reflection of the shift. While there are strong justifications for the shift, there is the potential problem that parents' needs and interests may overshadow program attention to the child. The literature on programs serving high-risk populations, for instance, points to the tendency for program workers to become heavily involved in crisis intervention regarding family matters (Halpern and Larner, 1988).

3. A recent development in parent education and support has resulted in programs being tailored to be responsive to the needs and characteristics of the population being served. The idea that a particular program model can work with almost any parent has given way to an interest in matching parents to different types of programs. This interest is especially evident in efforts to design programs that are responsive to cultural characteristics and values of ethnic populations, and in programs serving parents living in low-income and high-risk circumstances.

4. In high quality initiatives, a significant amount of program time is devoted to open-ended parent-dominated discussion. Principles of adult education recommend that programs include a strong experiential component. This is critical, because parents are likely to process new information according to existing beliefs about their child and child development. Discussion provides an opportunity for parents to digest new insights in relation to existing ideas.

Conclusion

Programs of parent education and support offer promising strategies for facilitating the education and development of young children. It is crucial for educators and policymakers to find ways to alter classroom practices, early childhood programs, and schools to promote the family's contributions to early education and development.

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IN BRIEF

An Information Digest From ERIC/CAPS
Educational Resources Information Center
Counseling and Personnel Services

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Schools by themselves cannot bring about children's academic achievement. In addition to individual student abilities and learning needs, parent involvement in mutual educational goals is crucial to academic success. This digest describes the following: parents' role in helping students learn, sample parent programs offered by the schools, suggestions for building parent programs, the use of home computers, and some possibilities for the role of the school counselor.

Parent Role

When parents show a strong interest in their children's schooling, they help them develop a positive attitude toward learning. Motivated students believe that studying makes the difference between success or failure. Parents can help their children do their best by (1) talking to them, (2) reading to them, (3) listening to them, (4) praising them, (5) watching television with them, (6) keeping them healthy, and (7) showing an interest in their school activities.

Parents can also help their children become better learners by encouraging them to accept responsibility for their own learning and to organize a system for studying. Such a system helps students learn how to pay attention, understand what they read, and develop good study habits.

In general, the two consistent outcomes reported in the parent involvement literature are that parent involvement (1) improves student academic achievement and (2) increases parental support for schools.

Sample Parent Programs

Effective parent programs emphasize the training of those who work with the parents. If paraprofessionals are used, some preliminary workshops may be required on utilizing interpersonal skills, achieving desired learning outcomes, and developing parent-child success experiences.

Parent-Aided Homework (PAH) is a behavior modification program designed to encourage parent involvement in their children's homework (Harris, 1983). Skilled guidance counselors or school psychologists give parents professional assistance in the home to promote study skills and foster positive home/school relationships.

The PAH plan stresses positive reinforcement for successfully completing homework assignments. Parents agree to be responsible for enforcing the agreed-on time limits for homework and to help with assignments when they can. The basic responsibility of parents is to monitor the program. The steps include: (1) explaining the program to the child; (2) finding suitable rewards; (3) providing extra work when needed; and (4) timing and charting behavior.

Another school/parent involvement program promotes parent group discussions and parent/teacher/counselor mini-workshops; provides home learning activities for the parent and child, and encourages parent participation in after-school parent programs (Cotton & Savard, 1982). Children of these parents showed marked improvement in reading and math skills at all grade levels, which in turn increased parental involvement in their children's education.

Project HELP (Home Educational Learning Program) features home learning activities using simple materials available in most homes (Rich, 1983). Orientation and explanation letters are sent home with the children at the beginning of school and specific guidelines are provided on such topics as self-reliance, children as individuals, health, discipline, television viewing, family travel, homework, and working mothers. This individualizes education in a meaningful, personal way at home, and has the additional advantage of being non-threatening to either parents or children because the activities are not traditional school work.

Suggestions for Building Parent Programs

1. Link the involvement of parents directly to their children's achievements. Programs using the model of parents as tutors or home-teachers do build achievement.
2. Provide opportunities for families to supplement and reinforce children's academic skills at home. This method reaches parents, even the least educated, and gets them to work with their child at home, building on their ambitions and love for their child.
3. Initiate local, state, and/or national efforts to expand educational partnerships in ways that support and reinforce one another. Examples

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are home learning activities, family learning centers, and a media campaign to educate the public on the uniqueness of the home as a learning place and its possibilities to help the child achieve.

4. Provide involvement opportunities at all levels of schooling for persons outside the schools. Continuing support is needed as young children become teenagers. Very few programs exist that meet the needs of adolescents. Schools can efficiently operate a communications program for parents of high school students by relying on a dual strategy: (1) regular and timely newsletter communication, and (2) early notification whenever problems arise academically or behaviorally. The Home and School Institute has tested a systematic program for involving senior citizens as volunteers in the classrooms and as liaisons to the home (Rich, 1983). These seniors work with teenagers and families who need extra help.

Use of Home Computers

In recent research, Dede and Gottlieb (1984) found that the impact of the microcomputer on family education patterns was relatively minor. Changes that the study could not substantiate included the following: major shifts in the role of the parent in providing assistance with homework; new types of parent/teacher interaction; the extensive use of the machine for remediation, diagnosis or enrichment; and the substitution of computer-based entertainment for time previously spent on education. The researchers cautioned, however, that the emergence of higher quality software for instruction may alter the situation.

Developments in cable and satellite telecommunications may also affect home computer use. If families can link their computers directly to the schools, new options for learning, teaching and counseling may open up.

Parents thinking about buying a home computer are advised to do some preliminary research, e.g.: (1) discuss the advantages and disadvantages with teachers, counselors and other parents who already own computers; (2) try to acquire some hands-on experience; and (3) identify and assess the uses for their particular home situation.

Counselors as Interpreters to Parents

One area of potential growth and outreach for school counselors is establishing and facilitating parent education groups. Such groups can improve family communication skills, promote children's cognitive functioning, and help both the single- and two-parent family understand the importance of their role as parent-educator. Studies indicate that these groups can mediate the negative effects of single-parent family status on children's academic performance.

Another area is the parent-student-counselor conference, which the counselor can use to set mutual educational goals. For older children, this demonstrates a method of providing career guidance if there are family conflicts about career choices.

In summary, researchers agree that it is parents who provide the most important learning environment, and that if they are not involved in the learning process, schools and students alike are being deprived of an essential source of support.

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PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

By David Peterson

Mothers and fathers hold bake sales, supervise field trips, and serve on boards or advisory councils for schools. They attend school concerts, plays, and sporting events. As helpful as these customary forms of parent involvement are, they are far removed from what happens in the classroom. A growing body of research suggests that parents can play a larger role in their children's education.

What Are the Benefits of Parent Involvement?

There are many advantages when parents play an active role in the educational process. Children spend much more time at home than at school. Their parents know them intimately, interact with them one-to-one, and do not expect to be paid to help their children succeed. The home environment, more familiar and less structured than the classroom, offers what Dorothy Rich (1985) calls "'teachable moments' that teachers can only dream about."

Children whose parents are involved in their formal education have many advantages. They have better grades, test scores, long-term academic achievement, attitudes, and behavior than those with disinterested mothers and fathers (Anne T. Henderson 1988).

Many studies underscore the point: parent participation in education is very closely related to student achievement. A Stanford study found that using parents as tutors brought significant and immediate changes in children's I.Q. scores. Other research projects found that community involvement correlated strongly with schoolwide achievement and that all forms of parent involvement helped student achievement. The Home and School Institute concluded that parent tutoring brought substantial improvements to a wide variety of students (Rich).

Family and school benefit when they cooperate. Children feel that these two institutions—by far the most important in their lives—overlap and are integrated. Parents who help their children succeed academically gain a sense of pride in their children and themselves. Such parents are strong advocates for the district.

What Can Parents Do to Improve Their Children's Performance?

Tutoring is probably the best way for parents to participate in public education, according to Rich. Intensive, one-to-one teaching is highly effective, and, unlike meetings, it does not take parents away from their children and their home.

Tutoring can be as simple as reading a book or discussing a television show. It may entail meeting with a teacher to determine how to help with homework. Or it can mean mastering a detailed curriculum written by specialists in home learning.

Parents' attitudes and expectations toward education can be as important as explicit teaching activities. The American Association of School Administrators (1988) suggests the following "curriculum of the home": high expectations, an emphasis on achievement, role modeling the work ethic, encouraging and providing a place for study, establishing and practicing structured routines, monitoring television, limiting afterschool jobs, and discussing school events.

What Are the Special Challenges for Involving the Parents of At-Risk Children?

Educators of at-risk children must realize that the term "at risk" is not synonymous with minority student, student in poverty, or student in single-parent or restructured household. Yet, as Carol Ascher (1987) points out, some family characteristics tend to inhibit academic achievement: households in which the parent or parents do not interact often with their children, ones whose composition frequently changes, non-English speaking households, and families whose cultural traditions sharply vary from the school's.

Educators must take the initiative if they wish to overcome such challenges. Briggs Middle School in Springfield, Oregon, hired a parent educator and a therapist to work directly with parents of at-risk children (Thomas E. Hart 1988). They contacted seventy-five parents, ten of whom completed the five-class program. A program developed by the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools (1989) enables teachers to involve parents in their children's education in math, science, and social studies. The TIPS (Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork) program consists of guidelines and materials that any school or district can adapt to its own curriculum objectives and texts.

Middle College High School of New York City offers a parent support group in which parents define the topics discussed: parent-child communication, financial aid, and teenage lifestyles, for example (Douglas Berman and others 1987). Their children's attendance, grades, and behavior improved noticeably.

Ascher points out that asking parents to come to school "shuts out parents who are afraid or unable" to do so, the very parents who may well need the most help in educating their children. Home visits, telephone calls, and meetings in neutral locations may be the key to working with these parents.

How Can Schools Get Parents Involved in Their Children's Education?

Some parents are too distrustful of schools to help them educate their children. Muriel Hamilton-Lee (1988) prescribes three solutions: get parents involved in special activities like P.T.A. and school outings, enlist them in regular school affairs as assistant teachers or library aides, and incorporate them on planning and management teams. "Having parents interact with school professionals as colleagues and peers," she concludes, "does a great deal to reduce the barriers between them." Empathy is critical in any program for disadvantaged parents.

Yet many parents who will not volunteer in the schools or are unavailable during school hours will take time to help their children learn, particularly if they can do so at home. There are specific programs for such parents, such as Reading Is Fundamental and Family Math, which starts with parent-child workshops. Other districts devise their own home-study curricula, often consisting of one weekly activity. The TIPS program calls for parents to help their children with math and science homework and to make presentations in social studies classrooms.

Most parents require some sort of training before using such curricula. Staff can use P.T.A. meetings, open houses, or special meetings to discuss the programs and how to teach them.

Less formal programs are more easily implemented. Teacher-parent conferences are ideal opportunities for suggesting and explaining simple home study activities. Teachers can follow up such conversations by sending home notes and photocopied materials.

How Can Parent-Involvement Programs Be Implemented on a Districtwide Basis?

Innovative and energetic teachers find ways to involve parents in education. Capable administrators can do that on a larger scale.

Implementation begins by making certain that all staff members understand the subject's importance. Administrators can hire staff sympathetic to parent involvement by discussing the topic in job interviews. Inservice trainings and amended contract language can help to educate and convince tenured teachers. Simply asking or requiring teachers to schedule some of their parent conferences in the evening can make a big difference. Some districts hire a parent-school coordinator to work with faculty and parents to integrate school and home learning.

Administrators can also alert parents to home education's advantages. Newsletters and calendars offer simple and inexpensive vehicles. Some districts use more sophisticated media. Radio, television, posters, or fliers can convey short, catchy slogans on home education's importance, or they can speak to more particular topics. The Indianapolis Public Schools, for example, widely publicizes its teacher-parent conferences to encourage participation (National School Boards Association 1988).

The DeKalb County School System in Georgia uses signed contracts to underscore how important parent involvement is (Edward L. Bouie, Sr., and others, n.d.). The contract, which is also signed by the student and teacher, commits the parent to talking about school daily, attending teacher-parent conferences, monitoring television viewing, and encouraging good study habits. In turn, the teacher agrees to "provide motivating and interesting experiences in my classroom," explain the grading system, provide homework, and so forth. The district holds a signing day at the beginning of each year.

There are many ways to awaken and tap the special abilities and concerns that parents have in their children's education.

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OVERVIEW

ERIC® DIGEST NO. 62

Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

PARENTS' ROLE IN TRANSITION FOR HANDICAPPED YOUTH

Parents have a major influence on their children's attitudes toward work and life. Many studies have recognized the effect of parental influence on educational and career decisions (Naylor 1986). Handicapped youth, who have more difficulty than other youth in making the transition from school to work and adult life, have a special need for parental guidance.

Transition can be defined as a systematic process to establish and implement a plan for the employment or additional training of a handicapped adolescent (Sitlington 1986). This Overview discusses the key roles parents can play in transition, especially in the areas of career exploration, job search and survival, independent living skills, and collaboration with educators and other service providers. It is based primarily upon the three parent guides in the *Corridors to Careers* package (Izzo, Kopp, and Liming 1986).

Roles in Career Exploration

Parents sometime overestimate the effects of a disability on their child's ability to accomplish a task. Lacking information about the requirements of specific occupations, they may rule out certain jobs as impossible. The process of career exploration involves learning more about individual limitations and strengths and about the requirements of various entry-level occupations, assessing individual interests, and matching interests and abilities with appropriate potential occupations.

Izzo, Kopp, and Liming (1986) describe some career exploration activities in which parents and handicapped youth can share. These include the following:

- Identify famous people who have achieved success despite their disability.
- Use checklists to identify the adolescent's personal qualities, capabilities, and ideal working conditions. Gather information from teachers, counselors, and close relatives as well.
- Take the adolescent to various businesses and point out the different jobs and their duties.
- Find out about interest surveys and aptitude tests that a trained professional can administer.
- Select an object in the home and identify all the people whose work made it possible.
- Gather information about potential occupations by using library resources, talking to people currently working, or visiting work sites.
- Find out about appropriate training options, such as high school vocational education, vocational rehabilitation, apprenticeships, 2-year or technical colleges, and supported or sheltered employment.
- Learn about work site modifications that may be needed to accommodate a disability.

Roles in Job Search and Survival

Parents can demonstrate the techniques of finding job leads, beginning with the help wanted ads. Before using them, abbreviations and terms that may be encountered should be explained; the adolescent can practice selecting an ad and explaining why the job is or is not desirable or appropriate. Other sources of leads include the telephone directory, school job placement office, state employment office, Rehabilitation Services Agency, private and temporary employment agencies, door-to-door canvassing, and job clubs.

Parents can assist in the preparation of a good resume by helping the adolescent think of accomplishments; by checking the information for accuracy and correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation; and by helping to identify persons who might give references. They might collect sample application forms from local businesses for practice in filling out application forms and preparing letters of application. Parents can also ensure that all the necessary documents (birth certificate, social security card, and so on) have been obtained.

To make their child comfortable with interviewing, parents can describe what happens during the process, can review strategies for success, and can assist in practicing responses to difficult questions. A mock interview can be conducted and the performance can be rated on such aspects as grooming and appearance, eye contact, poise, manners, enthusiasm, and so forth.

For handicapped youth, the most sensitive part of an interview is talking about their disability. Making the interviewer comfortable with the situation, stressing abilities, and responding positively about accommodations or modifications are ways of dealing with this area. Parents and youth should also be aware of the legal rights of handicapped workers as established by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Developing good work habits is essential to job survival. Through discussion and role playing, parents can stress the importance of following directions, being on time, taking pride in one's work, getting along with others, coping with problems, dressing appropriately, communicating clearly, being motivated, showing a willingness to learn, and demonstrating commitment to the occupation.

Roles in Independent Living Skills

The final step in the transition process is learning to live independently. Survival skills help adults cope with change, meet daily needs, and face challenges. Parents can begin by identifying those independent living skills already gained as well as those that need to be developed. A list of skills and appropriate activities follows.

Transportation

- Consider the specific disability, available community resources, and the individual situation (home location, financial resources).
- Evaluate the alternatives (bus, carpool, own car, bicycle, walking) according to availability, cost, and reliability.

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- Practice using available transportation. First, parents can plan outings, then have their child guide them on an outing, then have the child attempt a solo trip

Housing and Home Management

- Explore housing options, evaluating types, functions, costs, advantages, and disadvantages. Visit realtors, apartment managers, social service agencies, and group homes.
- Build the adolescent's home management skills by assigning regular household responsibilities. Evaluate the ability to keep records, identify sources of assistance, conduct business matters, make basic repairs, operate appliances safely, and use the right tools and products.

Financial Management

- Provide a weekly allowance to teach planning and budgeting. Evaluate the ability to make change, write checks, establish credit, make purchasing decisions, select insurance, and assess satisfactory service.
- Have the adolescent develop a budget based on projected income and expenses. Demonstrate the use of banking services. Ensure the mastery of basic math skills needed for handling money.

Decision Making

- Explain the steps of problem solving and the differences between responsible and irresponsible behavior.
- Through structured activities, allow the child to take responsibility for planning and problem solving, for example, on a family vacation.

Interpersonal Skills

- Encourage the improvement of personal relations skills through participation in family, school, community, and church activities.
- Teach the following assertiveness techniques: react with behavior instead of words; talk directly to people whose actions affect you; talk about yourself realistically but positively, and say no when appropriate.
- Teach the following skills for responding appropriately to insensitive people and situations: look for early signs of insensitivity, recognize one's emotional reactions, count to 10 before reacting, and choose an appropriate, constructive reaction.

Collaboration with Service Providers

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) can be an effective tool for coordinating the transition of special needs students. Schools are required by law to involve parents in the IEP planning process. Parents can influence this process by giving input at the initial meeting, monitoring and evaluating progress, and making suggestions for modifications.

According to Izzo, Kopp, and Liming (1986), the IEP should do the following:

- Include a specific transition plan that ensures that services continue after employment, contains precisely stated objectives and activities, and involves employers, rehabilitation and employment counselors, and other community-based personnel in the transition team.
- Focus on functional living skills by integrating instruction in reading, writing, and math with independent living skills.
- Include one school-supported work experience. Parents can suggest employers who may be willing to hire their adolescent for a paid or nonpaid position that is monitored by the school.

Parents should obtain the rules and regulations guiding the implementation of the IEP. They can request periodic reports from the school about their child's progress in meeting the objectives and can initiate changes in the plan to deal with problems that arise.

Parents as Role Models

In all of the transition areas discussed, parents are important role models. Their children form opinions about the value of work, different careers, and self-worth from what they observe their parents saying and doing. Parents demonstrate survival skills in day-to-day living. Sharing the strategies they use to solve problems, their feelings about particular issues, and why and how they pursue certain hobbies or find information are ways that parents can help their children learn survival techniques. The examples parents present their children may be their most important role in the transition process.

This ERIC digest is based on the following publication:

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Fact Sheet

Peer Counseling

Definition and Rationale

Peer counselors fall under the general rubric of paraprofessionals — those without extended professional training, who are selected from the group to be served, trained, and given ongoing supervision to perform some key function generally performed by a professional (Mamarchev, 1981). Frequently cited benefits from the use of peer counselors include: expanded services and reduced costs because professionals are freed for other duties; traditional counseling services enhanced by the unique abilities and skills of peer paraprofessionals; the opportunity to gain special insight into the needs and problems of the group being served; and a bridge for the gap between professionals and the diverse groups they serve. Peer counselors benefit from the specialized human relations training and the opportunity to help others, which contribute to their own personal growth and development.

History and Research

Although the initial policies of professional counseling associations toward the use of paraprofessionals emphasized clerical activities as their appropriate domain, more recent statements stress the value of peer facilitators' interpersonal skills and caution that they should not be used as clerical assistants (ASCA, 1984; Brown, 1974).

This increased acceptance of peer counselors in direct helping relationships is based on the results of research on paraprofessional effectiveness. Even though much of this research has been criticized for flaws of methodology and design, it nevertheless provides ample evidence that nonprofessionals with limited training (20-40 hours) can be as effective as professionals, in some areas, in bringing about positive client change (Hoffman & Warner, 1976; Scott & Warner, 1974).

In attempting to account for the effectiveness reported for peer counselors, researchers have examined differences in selection and training for paraprofessionals and professionals. While procedures for selecting peer counselors aim at identifying individuals who demonstrate empathy, high self-confidence, and the ability to accept values different from their own, selection in professional counselor training programs focuses on intellectual abilities which may not correlate with effective interpersonal skills. Peer counselor programs provide training in specific skills related to direct helping relationships. Professional training programs are often a mixture of science, art, research, and practice with limited time spent on interpersonal and facilitative skills (Brown, 1974).

Peer Counselor Programs

A successful peer counselor program is built on a solid foundation which includes:

- **Systematic needs assessment** — to determine whether peer counseling is the most appropriate or highest priority intervention.
- **Established support** — from all those affected by the program.
- **Specific rather than global program goals** — with written descriptions clearly defining roles, functions, and levels of responsibility.

Once the program's foundations have been laid important operating components — selection, training and supervision, and evaluation — must be implemented.

Selection

A preliminary step to the selection process is recruiting candidates from the population to be served. Whatever method is chosen to advertise for recruits, information on basic qualifications should emphasize: commitment to helping others and the ability to interact with a variety of people; willingness to accept standards of ethical conduct such as confidentiality of information; and willingness and ability to work within the philosophy and goals of the program (Delworth & Brown, 1977). Besides these basic qualifications, effective peer counselors have been found to possess the facilitative skills of empathy, genuineness, and respect for others.

Based on the assumption that the presence of these qualities indicates the individual can be trained to function as an effective helper, many selection procedures are designed to obtain information on candidates' present or pre-training levels of human relations skills. Biographical data sheets, objective personality measures, peer nominations, ratings of empathic responses to videotaped interactions, and references and recommendations are all examples of commonly used means to obtain this kind of information.

A second approach to selection directly assesses trainees' potential to benefit from training. The method involves the use of a brief training analog with pre- and post-testing of applicants' interpersonal skill levels, based on the idea that those who benefit from a small amount of training will more likely benefit from the whole (Delworth & Moore, 1974). The analog can be a small part of the actual training sequence.

A third approach, frequently used at the secondary school level, is self-selection, in which virtually everyone who applies to the program is accepted. In this case, a pre-training interview with a counselor to weed out those who are emotionally unstable, or a rigorous training process to discourage the uncommitted are the only screening devices.

Training

The content of peer counselor training usually covers three areas. The first is information about the policies, procedures, and organization of the program; ethical and legal considerations such as confidentiality; ways to establish a support network and sources of support; and the limitations of the peer counselor role, including signs which indicate professional help is needed and the procedures for referral. The second content area is job specific information, which relates to particular program objectives, e.g., to provide academic advising, tutoring, career guidance, or group counseling. The third area is interpersonal skills training.

The goal of training in interpersonal skills is to enhance trainees' positive, helping responses by teaching listening

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skills; awareness and understanding of verbal and nonverbal behavior; self-disclosure and expression of feeling; specific facilitative responses such as clarification, open questioning, and feedback; and strategies for establishing a nonthreatening environment.

The most effective process for training peer counselors includes both didactic and experiential techniques in a basic four-step sequence: (1) identifying and defining the skill in behavioral terms — breaking it down into small steps; (2) demonstrating or modeling both effective and ineffective examples of the skill; (3) practicing the skill with supervision and feedback until minimum competence is achieved; and (4) practicing the skill with supervision in real counseling situations. Specific techniques for the training process include the use of videotapes for modeling and feedback, role playing, group discussion, and exercises in values clarification, problem solving, and decision making.

Because having a skill is no guarantee that one can teach it, the selection and evaluation of trainers is as important for program success as the selection of trainees. Training the trainers is often accomplished within the peer counseling program, using a pyramid approach in which more advanced peer counselors, under professional supervision, act as trainers. This method has the advantage of providing the more experienced with new skills and new trainees with models of effective peer helping. Other ways of ensuring effective trainers include professional development workshops for counselors, and prepackaged training curricula with accompanying trainers' manuals (Danish & Brock, 1974). Professional supervision of peer counselors, during training as well as in actual practice, is regular and ongoing.

Evaluation

The goals of evaluating peer counseling programs are: (1) to provide performance feedback to professionals and peers; (2) to determine if training goals are being met; (3) to provide data for program improvement; and (4) to increase credibility and ensure the program's continued support. The evaluation process should be built into the initial program design and measure the effects of the program on peer counselors, on the population being served, and on the climate of the school or agency. Evaluation methods need not involve sophisticated research methodology. Following are suggestions for some easily implemented approaches:

- **Pre-post method** — measures changes that occur during the program, e.g., changes in peer counselor self-concept or communication skills.
- **Control group method** — compares differences between program participants and nonparticipants, e.g., trained peer counselors' helping skills compared to a general group.
- **Self-report method** — uses checklists, rating scales, or questionnaires to determine how well a program is meeting its goals; e.g., peer helpees rate their satisfaction with the program (Dougherty & Taylor, 1983).

The effects of the program on school or agency climate can often be measured using readily available data, such as the number of clients seen or the number of program participants, or through informal interviews with teachers, parents or administrators. The results of evaluations should be communicated to all those involved in and affected by the program.

Professional Responsibility

Professional responsibility is a salient issue in using paraprofessionals as peer counselors, especially in elementary and secondary schools where such programs involve minors. In addressing this issue, McManus (1982) described a high school program using secondary students to provide school psychological services, and detailed elements of the program which were designed to act as legal safeguards:

- Thorough education of all concerned persons before implementation and throughout the course of the program.
- Verbal and written permissions from parents of both peer counselors and their potential clients.
- Gradual implementation of program elements, with data collection on functional or neutral areas followed by the introduction of sensitive areas.
- Training emphasizing paraprofessional limitations and guidelines for referring to professionals.
- Ongoing professional supervision.

The basic components of successful peer counseling programs, as described earlier, have developed in large part through the effort to guarantee ongoing professional responsibility. Professional counselors' major responsibilities for peer counseling programs were identified in the early 1970s (Allen, 1972). While not all of them are relevant to every program, they remain the core areas:

- **Overall program planning** — to design, implement and evaluate the peer counseling program.
- **Role definition** — to specify peer counselors' functions, expectations and limitations.
- **Training and supervision** — to devise a peer counselor selection plan, provide preservice and inservice training, and supervise on a continual basis.
- **Legal liability** — to establish clear levels of authority between professionals and paraprofessionals and explicit guidelines for referral to professionals.

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PEER HELPING RELATIONSHIPS IN URBAN SCHOOLS

Young people help each other in many different ways. Beginning in childhood, as they play together, children learn important lessons such as sharing, communicating, and cooperating. Now, research has shown that students can benefit from structured in-school helping relationships in which peers assume formal roles as tutors. The benefits derived from these experiences are usually mutually shared by the student helper and the student learner.

The History of Peer Tutoring

Although peer tutoring was standard practice in many American classrooms as early as the nineteenth century, there was little mention of it in educational literature until the 1960s. Several factors have helped to bring about a renewed and expanded interest in peer helping relationships, particularly in urban schools.

The passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 provided impetus for the creation of peer tutoring programs and practices designed to improve the academic performance of student populations such as limited English proficient students and low achieving students. In addition, during the 1960s there emerged a shift in American education toward learning relationships involving small groups and teaching methods most appropriate for the individual student.[1]

Desegregation efforts also sought to increase interracial understanding through diverse, structured peer relationships. Finally, a growing number of research studies demonstrated the positive outcomes of peer tutoring on student achievement.

More recently, in-school peer helping relationships have been viewed as a vehicle for diversifying and redefining the role of the classroom teacher, as a response to personnel and resource limitations and to facilitate learning through the powerful influence of peer relationships.

Student Benefits from Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring consists of students teaching other students on a one-to-one basis, or one tutor working with two or three students simultaneously. The tutor may be the same age or in the same grade level as the student being tutored (same-age peers) or may be of a different age or grade (cross-age peers). Peer tutoring is a cooperative undertaking in which students share not only the answers but the process used to reach answers.

Students generally identify more easily with peer helpers than with adult authority figures.[2] Evidence has shown that modeling is an important dimension of peer tutoring.

> School children learn skills by observing their adult teachers, but observation of peer models may better enhance children's self-efficacy. In particular, an adult teacher flawlessly modeling cognitive skills may not promote high self-efficacy in children who have encountered previous difficulties with the subject matter and who view the teacher as superior in competence.[3]

Further, students being tutored benefit from receiving immediate clarification of information they don't understand, and feedback in a nonthreatening environment, free from the fear of teacher criticism or class ridicule.

As a result of their efforts to help others, tutors reinforce their own knowledge and skills, which in turn builds their self-confidence and self-esteem. Peer tutors also develop a sense of responsibility as a result of helping students to learn.[4] Finally, explaining the subject matter to others helps tutors better understand it themselves.

Both peer tutors and students being tutored have also reported improved attitudes toward school as a result of their participation.[5]

The use of peer tutors in the classroom can make teachers more flexible and enable them to better target their efforts toward individual students. They can introduce learning activities that could not be accommodated within their regular teaching load. Peer tutors, by assuming responsibility for the reinforcement of what has been covered in class by the teacher, or for remedial instruction, can free teachers for new roles as coordinators and facilitators, instead of their functioning solely as dispensers of knowledge.[6]

Enhancing the Effectiveness of Peer Tutoring

Numerous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the peer tutoring relationship. Students in effective programs consistently reach higher levels of academic achievement than students in conventional learning, or mastery learning situations.[7]

While there is some evidence suggesting that benefits are greatest for students who have previously demonstrated difficulty in relating to their peers and students who lack experience in working cooperatively with others, neither the nature of the child being tutored nor the characteristics of the tutor seem to matter as much as the sense of "mutual reward," some of which may be intrinsic to the tutoring process.[8] Cross-age peer tutoring may be especially effective with those students whose cultural tradition includes an emphasis on the responsibility of older children for their younger siblings.[9] Others have postulated that while mixed race/ethnic pairings may result in more positive interethnic/racial relationships, a culture shared by two students of similar backgrounds may also contribute to the beneficial outcomes of peer tutoring.[10]

Peer tutoring programs have been incorporated into the regular classroom structure and as separate programs that take place in a laboratory, resource room, or tutoring center. The subject matter to be covered and the objectives of the program often determine the facilities and organization used.

For example, in a regular classroom setting, while students are working with a peer tutor, other students may be involved in small groups or in individual study. In another case, the requirements of special education students may necessitate that peer tutoring take place in a resource room; or, peer tutoring programs with a science focus may require a laboratory facility.

While the research is not clear regarding the most effective organization for peer tutoring programs, it is clear that teacher planning, training, and management are critical and continuing factors in successful program implementation. Also, effective programs combine tutoring instruction with regularly scheduled assessment to provide feedback concerning the extent to which students being tutored have mastered the subject matter and to determine whether additional corrective work is required.[11]

Developing Effective Peer Tutoring Programs

First, planners should provide full information on the characteristics and benefits of peer tutoring programs in order to prevent the development of misconceptions and misunderstandings by those who will be involved—parents, administrators, teachers, and students. It is also important to obtain the early support of the school administration, as well as the authority to carry out program planning and implementation tasks.[12]

Effective programs have generally followed this process:

- ***Establish a planning group*** to collect suggestions and opinions, prepare written plans, and develop budgets.
- ***Assess student needs*** through discussions with faculty and staff, and a review of school records.
- ***Develop measurable program goals and objectives*** consistent with and supportive of the educational/social goals of the school.
- ***Determine facility, material, and equipment needs.***
- ***Determine personnel requirements.***
- ***Develop a draft plan*** for review by school authorities.
- ***Formally present the revised plan*** to teachers, parents, district administrators and other stakeholders.
- ***Conduct an orientation*** for students, faculty, and program staff to review tutor recruitment and selection; tutor training; procedures for student intake and referral; guidelines for matching and assigning students; and coordination of routine tasks (communication, monitoring and supervision, reporting, and public relations).
- ***Conduct ongoing evaluation*** following implementation to ensure continued improvement and consistent support.[13]

Despite an increase in peer tutoring programs over the last two decades, peer tutoring continues to be an underutilized instructional strategy in urban schools. Reasons for this may be that such programs alter the traditional and accepted roles of teachers and students, that programs are difficult to plan and implement, and that school personnel generally lack the training and support necessary for successful programs. Nevertheless, the demonstrated effectiveness of some tutoring programs suggests that efforts to create them can be well rewarded.

—Michael Webb

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PLUGGING IN TO COMPUTER BULLETIN BOARDS

Computer bulletin boards get noticed when people get arrested.

Teenagers in New Jersey were accused of using a bulletin board system (BBS) to trade tips on breaking into government computers. A computer programmer in Virginia was charged with running a BBS devoted to child pornography. And kids in California allegedly used a bulletin board to swap illicit credit card numbers.

But while the underground boards get the headlines, thousands of other computer users are putting bulletin boards to use in honest and innocent ways. Businesses are using them to communicate with employees and customers. Computer clubs sponsor boards for their members. Churches and public-interest organizations use them to spread their gospel. And bulletin boards are springing up across the country in public libraries, schools, and colleges.

"The BBS movement is big time," says computer columnist John Dvorak. Estimates of the number of bulletin boards in operation run upwards of 4,000, but nobody knows for sure because turning a computer into a BBS is like plugging in a telephone answering machine—a simple matter of personal communication choice.

What is a bulletin board system?

Simply put, a BBS is a modem-equipped computer that can communicate with other modem-equipped computers over ordinary telephone lines. A modem translates computer text and numeric data into an audio signal that can be passed back and forth. The BBS software tells the computer how to act as a host for other computers that dial in.

When bulletin board systems first began to appear in the late 1970s, they were little more than electronic versions of the old fashioned push-pin type. Computer hobbyists in Chicago, who created the first BBS on a microcomputer, used the system to swap hardware and software, post club meeting times, and exchange technical tips.

Since then, BBS communication has outgrown the "techie" culture that spawned it. As computers become an increasingly common appliance, groups and individuals whose interests extend beyond computers have found bulletin boards to be efficient communication devices.

Who uses bulletin boards?

Here are some examples:

Investment groups such as The Association of Individual Investors in Chicago use bulletin boards for members to swap ideas. Clients of Max Ule & Co., a discount brokerage firm in New York, can call the Ule BBS to get quotes or place orders.

Churches in Maryland, Iowa, California, and Arkansas use bulletin boards as outreach tools. And special groups such as the Bai'hi faith have their own boards.

Doctors at a Cleveland hospital offer electronic house calls through a BBS they call "Doc In The Box." Health professionals in Minnesota, Texas, California, and Maryland use bulletin boards as information clearinghouses. A board in Washington, DC, posts news about AIDS research, and a California psychologist will conduct counseling sessions by modem.

Other professional groups including lawyers, social workers, broadcasters, architects, and corporate insurance managers have their own boards. Several systems put professional writers in touch with publishers and farmers can get crop and livestock advice from a BBS run by Purdue University.

There are political boards run by Nazis and leftist radicals, by people who want to ban the bomb and feed the world. A Connecticut board communicates with political campaign organizers from around the country, and a state senator in Michigan uses a BBS to communicate with his constituents.

Bulletin boards in schools

Schools have been especially interested in bulletin boards. In New York, the Brooklyn Math and Science Research Academy runs a BBS called Brainwave where students can trade tips on research projects, check deadlines for scholarship applications, and find a tutor from a database of volunteers.

"We also use it for math and science competitions," said Marc Licht, who started the BBS for the school. "In the morning, we'll put math or science questions on the board. Students at each school log in, get the questions, and try to answer them. Then the teachers file the scores and we'll post the winners on the BBS the next day."

High schools in Richmond, CA, Cheyenne, CO, and other cities have put bulletin boards online. So have colleges in San Diego and Northern Michigan, and education agencies such as the Far West Regional Educational Laboratory in San Francisco. The University of Arizona has an extensive BBS that posts alumni news, campus events, and corporate recruitment visits.

Setting up a bulletin board

Running a bulletin board can be time-consuming, but setting it up is often no more challenging than learning a new word processing program. Necessary tools include a computer, an auto-answer modem, plenty of data storage, a telephone line, and BBS software.

BBS packages are available for most popular computers, including the Apple II, IBM PC, Commodore 64, and even the new Amiga and Atari ST models. Two disk drives are a minimum requirement; a hard disk is the best option. And a phone line dedicated solely to the BBS will eliminate confusion.

There are more than 40 commercial BBS software packages on the market and a dozen or so others that are in the public domain. Fido BBS software for the IBM, for example, can be downloaded directly from many Fido boards.

Tips for system operators (sysops)

Once the BBS is open to the public, or even to a select group, the operator—a sysop in BBS jargon—should be alert for some special problems from high-tech vandals. A sysop in the Washington, DC, area recently got help from the phone company to track down a teenager who transferred material from his board and demanded a ransom to return it.

Sysops have also recently encountered destructive programs uploaded by unidentified callers. The programs masquerade as harmless utilities, but when booted, they can erase an entire hard disk. That's why it's best to closely examine any program that comes in through the BBS.

It also pays to read everything that's posted on the BBS. When phone company investigators found stolen access numbers posted on a board in California, they got the local police to arrest the sysop and confiscate his computer. The sysop argued that he didn't know about the postings and he eventually got his equipment back—but not without a lot of trouble and expense.

Some lawyers argue that bulletin boards are like public kiosks and that their operators shouldn't be held liable for all posted material. But there is yet to be a court ruling on that contention, so most sysops choose to play it safe.

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Link-Up, Learned Information Inc., 143 Old Marlton Pike, Medford, NJ 08055. Monthly, $22 per year.

The New York Times Magazine. "Of Bytes and Bulletin Boards," by Martin Lasden. August 4, 1985, page 34.

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BBS Software:

The *Bread Board System* (TBBS), $300, Ebert Personal Computers Inc., 4122 S. Parker Rd., Aurora, CO 80014. Packages for TRS-80, Kaypro IV/V, Epson QX-10 and IBM PC and compatibles.

Fido, free as a download from another Fido board or available with full documentation for $100 from Tom Jennings, 2269 Market Street #118, San Francisco, CA 94114. Packages for IBM PC and DEC Rainbow.

Let's Talk, $125, RUSS Systems, 320 Dufour, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. For the Apple II+, IIe and IIc.

Mouse Exchange, $40, Dreams of the Phoenix, Inc., Box 10273, Jacksonville, FL 32247. For the Macintosh.

Selected Bulletin Boards:

Most are open 24 hours, operate at 300 or 1200 baud and use 8 bits and 1 stop bit for communications parameters.

Roland BBS, Long Beach, CA. Files pertaining to computer design and music. 213-438-6783.

Warlock's Castle, Collinsville, IL. Computer and general interest files. 618-345-6638.

FACTS, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN. Agriculture news and reports. 317-494-6643.

Doc In The Box, Cleveland, OH. Medical help and advice. 216-368-3888.

Microcomputer Electronic Information Exchange, Maryland. Information on microcomputer usage in the federal government. 301-948-5718.

Health Education Electronic Forum, Ames, IA. Health education and disease prevention information. 515-233-5254.

North Pulaski BBS. Sponsored by a branch of the Chicago Public Library. 312-235-3200.

JOBBS. Postings from people seeking and offering jobs. 404-992-8937.

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Positive Discipline

How do young children learn self-control, self-help, ways to get along with others, and family and school procedures? Such learning occurs when parents and teachers of infants, toddlers, or preschoolers are continuously involved in setting limits, encouraging desired behaviors, and making decisions about managing children.

When making these decisions, caregivers often ask themselves these questions: Am I disciplining in a way that hurts or helps this child's self-esteem? Will my discipline help the child develop self-control? This digest suggests methods and language that can be used in handling common situations involving young children.

Methods of Discipline That Promote Self-Worth

1. Show that you recognize and accept the reason the child is doing what, in your judgment, is the wrong thing:

> "You want to play with the truck but..."
> "You want me to stay with you but..."

This validates the legitimacy of the child's desires and illustrates that you are an understanding person. It also is honest from the outset: The adult is wiser, in charge, not afraid to be the leader, and occasionally has priorities other than those of the child.

2. State the "but":

> "You want to play with the truck, *but Jerisa is using it right now.*"
> "You want me to stay with you, *but right now I need to (go out, help Jill, serve lunch, etc.).*"

This lets the child know that others have needs, too. It teaches *perspective taking*, and may lead the child to develop the ability to put himself in other people's shoes. It will also gain you the child's respect, for it shows you are fair. And it will make the child feel safe; you are able to keep him safe.

3. Offer a solution:

> "Soon you can play with the truck."

One-year-olds can begin to understand "just a minute" and will wait patiently if we always follow through 60 seconds later. Two- and three-year-olds can learn to understand, "I'll tell you when it's your turn," if we always follow through within two or three minutes. This helps children learn how to delay gratification but does not thwart their short-term understanding of time.

4. Often, it's helpful to say something indicating your confidence in the child's ability and willingness to learn:

> "When you get older I know you will (whatever it is you expect)."
>
> "Next time you can (restate what is expected in a positive manner)."

This affirms your faith in the child, lets her know that you assume she has the capacity to grow and mature, and transmits your belief in her good intentions.

5. In some situations, after firmly stating what is not to be done, you can demonstrate *how we do it*, or *a better way*:

> "We don't hit. Pat my face gently." (Gently stroke).
> "Puzzle pieces are not for throwing. Let's put them in their places together." (Offer help).

This sets firm limits, yet helps the child feel that you two are a team, not enemies.

6. Toddlers are not easy to distract, but frequently they can be redirected to something that is similar but OK. Carry or lead the child by the hand, saying,

> "That's the gerbil's paper. Here's your paper."
> "Peter needs that toy. Here's a toy for you."

This endorses the child's right to choose what she will do, yet begins to teach that others have rights, too.

7. Avoid accusation. Even with babies, communicate in respectful tones and words. This prevents a lowering of the child's self-image and promotes his tendency to cooperate.

8. For every *no*, offer two acceptable choices:

> "No! Rosie cannot bite Esther. Rosie can bite the rubber duck or the cracker."
> "No, Jackie. That book is for teachers. You can have this book or this book."

This encourages the child's independence and emerging decision-making skills, but sets boundaries. Children should never be allowed to hurt each other. It's bad for the self-image of the one who hurts and the one who is hurt.

9. If children have enough language, help them express their feelings, including anger, and their wishes. Help them think about alternatives and solutions to problems. Adults should never fear children's anger:

> "You're mad at me because you're so tired. It's hard to feel loving when you need to sleep. When you wake up, I think you'll feel more friendly."
> "You feel angry because I won't let you have candy. I will let you choose a banana or an apple. Which do you want?"

This encourages characteristics we want to see emerge in children, such as awareness of feelings and reasonable assertiveness, and gives children tools for solving problems without unpleasant scenes.

10. Establish firm limits and standards as needed. Until a child is 1 1/2 or almost 2 years old, adults are completely responsible for his safety and comfort, and for creating the conditions that encourage good behavior. After this age, while adults are still responsible for the child's safety, they increasingly, though extremely gradually, begin to transfer responsibility for behaving acceptably to the child. They start expecting the child to become aware of others' feelings. They begin to expect the child to think simple cause/effect thoughts (provided the child is guided quietly through the thinking process). This is teaching the rudiments of self-discipline.

11. To avoid confusion when talking to very young children, give clear, simple directions in a firm, friendly voice. This will ensure that children are not overwhelmed with a blizzard of words and refuse to comply as a result.

12. Remember that the job of a toddler, and to some extent the job of all young children, is to taste, touch, smell, squeeze, tote, poke, pour, sort, explore, and test. At times toddlers are greedy, at times grandiose. They do not share well; they need time to experience ownership before they are expected to share. They need to assert themselves ("No," "I can't," "I won't," and "Do it myself"). They need to separate to a degree from their parents, that is, to individuate. One way they do this is to say *no* and not to do what is asked; another is to do what is not wanted.

If adults understand children in this age range, they will create circumstances and develop attitudes that permit and promote development. Self discipline is better learned through guidance than through punishment. It's better learned through a "We are a team, I am the leader, it's my job to help you grow up" approach than through a "me against you" approach.

Creating a Positive Climate Promotes Self-Discipline

Creating a positive climate for the very young involves

- spending lots of leisurely time with an infant or child;
- sharing important activities and meaningful play;
- listening and answering as an equal, not as an instructor (for example, using labeling words when a toddler points inquiringly toward something, or discussing whatever topic the 2-year-old is trying to tell you about);
- complimenting the child's efforts: "William is feeding himself!" "Juana is putting on her shoe!" (even if what you are seeing is only clumsy stabs in the right direction); and
- smiling, touching, caressing, kissing, cuddling, holding, rocking, hugging.

Harmful, Negative Disciplinary Methods

Criticizing, discouraging, creating obstacles and barriers, blaming, shaming, using sarcastic or cruel humor, or using physical punishment are some negative disciplinary methods used with young children. Often saying, "Stop that!" "Don't do it that way!" or "You never..." is harmful to children's self-esteem. Such discipline techniques as removal from the group, or isolation in a time-out chair or a corner, may have negative consequences for the child.

Any adult might occasionally do any of these things. Doing any or all of them more than once in a while means that a negative approach to discipline has become a habit and urgently needs to be altered before the child experiences low self-esteem as a permanent part of her personality.

Good Approaches to Discipline

- increase a child's self-esteem,
- allow her to feel valued,
- encourage her to feel cooperative,
- enable her to learn gradually the many skills involved in taking some responsibility for what happens to her,
- motivate her to change her strategy rather than to blame others,
- help her to take initiative, relate successfully to others, and solve problems.

This digest was adopted from an article that appeared in the November, 1988 issue of *Young Children* (pages 24-9).

For More Information

"Ideas That Work with Young Children: Avoiding *Me Against You* Discipline." *Young Children* (November, 1988): 24-9.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Post-Traumatic Loss Debriefing: Providing Immediate Support for Survivors of Suicide or Sudden Loss

Overview

Children's suicidal behavior is escalating as America's number one mental health concern. Suicide intervention and prevention within the context of the school-as-community does not end with a student's death. School counselors, administrators and mental health professionals need to develop systematic strategies to intervene with survivors, as well as potentially at-risk students.

The sudden, unexpected death by suicide or the sudden loss from an accidental death often produces a characteristic set of psychological and physiological responses among survivors. Persons exposed to traumatic events such as suicide or sudden loss often manifest the following stress reactions: irritability, sleep disturbance, anxiety, startle reaction, nausea, headache, difficulty concentrating, confusion, fear, guilt, withdrawal, anger, and reactive depression. The particular pattern of the emotional reaction and type of response will differ with each survivor depending on the relationship of the deceased, circumstances surrounding the death, and coping mechanisms of the survivors. The ultimate contribution of suicide or sudden loss intervention with survivor groups is to create an appropriate and meaningful opportunity to respond to suicide or sudden death.

Providing Structure During Chaos

Post-traumatic loss debriefing is a structured group process approach to help survivors manage their physical, cognitive and emotional responses to a traumatic loss. It creates a supportive environment to process blocked communication which often interferes with the expression of grief or feelings of guilt. It also serves to correct distorted attitudes toward the deceased, as well as discuss ways of coping with the loss. The purpose of the debriefing is to reduce the trauma associated with the sudden loss, initiate an adaptive grief process and prevent further self-destructive or self-defeating behavior.

Post-traumatic loss debriefing is composed of seven stages: introductory stage, fact stage, life-review stage, feeling stage, reaction stage, learning stage, and closure. A debriefing should be organized 24 to 72 hours after the death. Natural feelings of denial and avoidance predominate during the first 24 hours. The debriefing can be offered to all persons affected by the loss, however, it is probably most effective with the immediate survivor group.

Stages of Post-Traumatic Loss Debriefing

I. Introductory Stage: Introduce survivors to the debriefing process.

- The counselor defines the nature, limits, roles and goals within the debriefing process.
- The counselor clarifies time limits, number of sessions, and confidentiality and strives to create a secure environment in which to share anxieties.

II. Fact Stage: Information is gathered to "recreate the event" from what is known about it. During the fact phase, participants are asked to recreate the event for the counselor. The focus of this stage is on **facts,** not feelings.

- Group members are asked to make a brief statement regarding their relationship with the deceased, how they heard about the death, and circumstances surrounding the event. It is important that the group share the same story concerning the death and that secrets or rumors not be permitted to divide members from each other. Group processing of the death also provides the counselor with an opportunity to listen for any attributions of guilt, extreme emotional responses, or post-traumatic stress reactions.
- Survivors are encouraged to engage in a moderate level of self-disclosure, with counselor facilitated statements such as, "I didn't know...could you tell me what that was like for you?"

It is important for the counselor to: (1) try to achieve an accurate sense of the survivor's world; (2) be aware of the survivors' choice of topics regarding the death; (3) gain insight into their priorities for the moment; and (4) help survivors see the many factors which contributed to the death and to curtail self-blame.

This low initial interaction is a non-threatening warm-up and naturally leads into a discussion of feelings in the next stage. It also provides a climate in which to share the details of the death and to intervene to prevent secrets or rumors that may divide survivors.

III. Life Review Stage: A life review of the deceased can be the next focus, if appropriate. Zinner (1987) maintains that a life review provides an opportunity for the group members to recount personal anecdotes about the deceased. The opportunity to share "remember when..." stories lessens tension and anxiety within the survivor group. This also serves to ease the acceptance of the helping professional by the group.

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IV. Feeling Stage: Feelings are identified and integrated into the process. At this stage, survivors should have the opportunity to share the burden of the feelings they are experiencing in a nonjudgmental, supportive and understanding manner. Survivors must be permitted to identify their own behavioral reactions and to relate to the immediate present, i.e., the "here and now."

- The counselor begins by asking feeling-oriented questions: "How did you feel when that happened?" and "How are you feeling now?" This is a critical component where survivors acknowledge that "things do get better" with time.
- Each person in the group is offered an opportunity to answer these and a variety of other questions regarding their feelings. It is important that survivors express thoughts of responsibility regarding the event and process the accompanying feelings of sadness.
- At this stage, as in others, it is most critical that no one gets left out of the discussion, and that no one dominates the discussion at the expense of others. All feelings, positive or negative, big or small, are important and need to be listened to and expressed. More importantly, however, this particular stage allows survivors to see that subtle changes are occurring between what happened then and what is happening now.

V. Reaction Stage: This stage explores the physical and cognitive stress reactions to the traumatic event. Acute reactions can last from a few days to a few weeks. Selected post-traumatic stress reactions include nausea, distressing dreams, difficulty concentrating, depression, feeling isolated, grief, anxiety and fear of losing control.

- The counselor asks such questions as, "What reactions did you experience at the time of the incident?" and "What are you experiencing now?"
- The counselor encourages survivors to discuss what is going on in their school and/or work lives and in their relationships with parents, peers and teachers.

VI. Learning Stage: This stage is designed to assist survivors in learning new coping skills to deal with their grief reactions. It is also therapeutic to help survivors realize that others are having similar feelings and experiences.

- The counselor assumes the responsibility of teaching the group something about their typical stress response reactions.
- The emphasis is on describing how typical and natural it is for people to experience a wide variety of feelings, emotions and physical reactions to any traumatic event. Adolescents, in particular, need to know that their reactions are not unique, but are universally shared reactions.
- Critical to this stage is being alert to danger signals in order to prevent destructive outcomes and to help survivors return to their pre-crisis equilibrium and interpersonal stability.

This stage also serves as a primary prevention component for future self-defeating or self-destructive behavior by identifying the normal responses to a traumatic event in a secure, therapeutic environment with a caring, trusted adult.

VII. Closure Stage: This final stage seeks to wrap up loose ends, answer outstanding questions, provide final assurances, and create a plan of action that is life-centered. Survivor groups often need a direction or specific shared activity after a debriefing to bring closure to the process. Discussion surrounding memorials are often suggested and need appropriate direction.

- Survivors should be aware that closure is taking place, therefore, no new issues should be introduced or discussed at this stage of the debriefing process.
- The counselor should: (1) examine whether initial stress symptoms have been reduced or eliminated; (2) assess the coping abilities of the survivors; and (3) determine if increased levels of relating to others and the environment have occurred, i.e., are the survivors genuinely hopeful regarding their immediate future? Are the survivors managing their lives more effectively?
- The group may also close by planning a group activity together such as a "living task," for example, going to a movie, concert, or similar activity to promote a sense of purpose and unity.

Ultimately, school counselors are in a unique position to guide intervention and postvention efforts when a suicide or sudden loss occurs. This debriefing procedure provides the critical component for restoring school/community equilibrium.

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Digest

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Praise in the Classroom

Randy Hitz and Amy Driscoll

Most educators agree that children need to be in supportive, friendly environments. But recent research indicates that some teacher attempts to create such environments by using praise may actually be counterproductive.

The purpose of this digest is to give teachers new insights into ways to make their statements of praise more effective and consistent with the goals most early childhood educators have for children, namely, to foster self-esteem, autonomy, self-reliance, achievement, and motivation for learning. Most teachers praise students in order to enhance progress toward these goals. However, current research poses the possibility that some common uses of praise may actually have negative effects in some or all of these areas.

Praise: Effects on Self-Esteem and Autonomy

Some praise statements may have the potential to lower students' confidence in themselves. In a study of second graders in science classrooms, Rowe (1974) found that praise lowered students' confidence in their answers and reduced the number of verbal responses they offered. The students exhibited many characteristics indicative of lower self-esteem, such as responding in doubtful tones and showing lack of persistence or desire to keep trying. In addition, students frequently tried to "read" or check the teacher's eyes for signs of approval or disapproval.

In a series of six studies of subjects ranging in age from third grade to adult, Meyer (1979) found that under some conditions, praise led recipients to have low expectations of success at difficult tasks, which in turn decreased the persistence and performance intensity at the task. It seems that certain kinds of praise may set up even the most capable students for failure. No student can always be "good" or "nice" or "smart." In order to avoid negative evaluations, students may tend not to take chances and attempt difficult tasks.

Praise as a Motivator

Many teachers attempt to use praise as a form of positive reinforcement in order to motivate students to achieve and behave in positive ways. However, as Brophy (1981) points out, trying to use praise as a systematic reinforcer in a classroom setting is impractical. Even if teachers were able to praise frequently and systematically, say once every 5 minutes, the average student would still be praised less than once every 2 hours. Brophy's research disclosed the reality that much teacher praise is not deliberate reinforcement, but rather, is elicited by students—the students actually condition the teacher to praise them.

Even if teachers could praise students systematically, there is still some indication that such praise would not be effective. Researchers point out that at best praise is a weak reinforcer. Not all young children are interested in pleasing the teacher, and as children grow older, interest in pleasing the teacher diminishes significantly. Esler (1983) reports that correlations between teachers' rates of praise and students' learning gains are not always positive, and even when correlations are positive, they are usually too low to be considered significant.

Some researchers (Martin, 1977; Stringer and Hurt, 1981) have found that praise can actually lessen self-motivation and cause children to become dependent on rewards. Green and Lepper (1974) found that once teachers began praising preschool children for doing something they were already motivated to do, the children became less motivated to do the activity.

Research demonstrates that various forms of praise can have different kinds of effects on different kinds of students. Students from different socioeconomic classes, ability levels, and genders may not respond in the same way to praise. The use of praise is further complicated by the fact that it may have differential effects depending on the type of achievement being measured. For example, praise may be useful in motivating students to learn by rote, but it may discourage problem solving.

Praise as a Classroom Management Tool

Teachers of young children are especially likely to try to use praise as a way to manage individuals or groups of children. A statement such as "I like the way Johnny is sitting," is often aimed not only at Johnny's behavior but also at nudging children in the group to conform. Teachers of older students would never get away with such control techniques. Even young children who may not be able to articulate their frustration with such blatant manipulation may show their resentment by defiantly refusing to conform or by imitating the "misbehaving" child.

Kounin (1970) did extensive observations in kindergarten classrooms in order to gain insight into effective management practices. He found that smoothness and maintenance of the momentum of classroom instruction and activities were the most powerful variables in controlling deviant behavior and maintaining student attention. Praise did not contribute to effective classroom management.

Praise Versus Encouragement

Research does indicate that there are effective ways to praise students. The terms *effective praise* and *encouragement* are often used by researchers and other professionals to describe the same approach. In this paper, we will refer to both as *encouragement*.

To praise is "to commend the worth of or to express approval or admiration" (Brophy, 1981, p.5). Dreikurs and others (1982) say that praise is usually given to a child when a task or deed is completed or is well done. Encouragement, on the other hand, refers to a positive acknowledgment response that focuses on student efforts or specific attributes of work completed. Unlike praise, encouragement does not place judgment on student work or give information regarding its value or implications of student status. Statements such as "You draw beautifully, Marc," or "Terrific job, Stephanie," are examples of praise. They are nonspecific, place a judgment on the student, and give some indication of the student's status in the group.

Encouragement, on the other hand:

- Offers specific feedback rather than general comments. For example, instead of saying, "Terrific job," teachers can comment on specific behaviors that they wish to acknowledge.
- Is teacher-initiated and private. Privacy increases the potential for an honest exchange of ideas and an opportunity for the student to talk about his or her work.
- Focuses on improvement and efforts rather than evaluation of a finished product.
- Uses sincere, direct comments delivered with a natural voice.
- Does not set students up for failure. Labels such as *nice* or *terrific* set students up for failure because they cannot always be *nice* or *terrific*.
- Helps students develop an appreciation of their behaviors and achievements.
- Avoids competition or comparisons with others.
- Works toward self-satisfaction from a task or product.

Children have an intrinsic desire to learn. Ineffective praise can stifle students' natural curiosity and desire to learn by focusing their attention on extrinsic rewards rather than the intrinsic rewards that come from the task itself (Brophy, 1981). This kind of praise replaces a desire to learn with blind conformity, a mechanical work style, or even open defiance. On the other hand, teachers who encourage students create an environment in which students do not have to fear continuous evaluation, where they can make mistakes and learn from them, and where they do not always need to strive to meet someone else's standard of excellence. Most students thrive in encouraging environments where they receive specific feedback and have the opportunity to evaluate their own behavior and work. Encouragement fosters autonomy, positive self-esteem, a willingness to explore, and acceptance of self and others.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Precollege Guidance and Counseling

Overview

Counseling is entrusted with the major responsibility of assisting students to make appropriate choices and decisions for the future, and thus is involved with the critical processes of student development and transition. Spurred on by the recent impetus toward reform and the concern with promoting excellence in education, the field of counseling recently has immersed itself in self-examination. In September 1984, the Trustees of the College Board appointed a 21-member Commission to review the evolution and current condition of precollege guidance and counseling, and to render judgments and recommendations. Their report, entitled *Keeping the Options Open*, was published in 1986. The National College Counseling Project (NCCP), formed in September 1983 and sponsored by the National Association of College Admission Counselors (NACAC), sought to examine the status of college counseling in schools across the country, analyzing the role of precollege counseling in enhancing student aspirations and in helping students gain admission to college. Their analysis, reported in *Frontiers of Possibility*, was also published in 1986.

The Counselor and Transition to College

The Decision to Enter College. Studies show that the greatest determinant of who goes to college is socioeconomic status. Parents and counselors are the primary influences. The decision is very different for first- and second-generation college entrants. Students who are most likely to depend on the school are those whose parents have not experienced college. Lee and Ekstrom (1987) report that 56 percent of public high school students report some counselor influence, particularly blacks, females, students in the academic track, and those who plan to attend four-year colleges. Chapman, O'Brien, and DeMasi (1987) found that one in five students never discussed college plans with a counselor.

Counselor Role. Counselors play a crucial role in the student's passage through the educational process. They facilitate decision-making and access to appropriate courses and experiences to help students address immediate and long-term goals. In public schools, scheduling and discipline take precedence over precollege counseling in the use of counselors' time (Lee & Ekstrom, 1987). Though the student:counselor ratio limits the practical availability of counseling, Chapman and DeMasi (1984) indicate that 20 percent of counselor time is used for college advising and that counselors report satisfaction with this situation.

Counseling Effectiveness. In some studies, precollege advising has come under a great deal of criticism. Though students appreciate counselors' functioning in other spheres, Chapman et al. (1987) found low-income students indifferent to the counselor's role in assisting with postsecondary preparation. College advising by the school counselor is especially important in low-income and minority families where parents are unable to offer first-hand information on college life, selection, and financial aid. Chapman et al. (1987) and Lee and Ekstrom (1987), however, have found that counselors often devote more time to college-bound, middle- and upper-income white students. Though blacks have significantly more counselor contacts than others (mostly regarding financial aid), in general low-income students do not make as great use of counselors as other students do.

Equity in Counseling

Family income is the major determinant of the education a student receives (Lee & Ekstrom, 1987). Counselors are in a position to help overcome the considerable inequities evident in education, provided that school systems give them the support and resources necessary to carry out their responsibilities.

Access to Counseling. Lee and Ekstrom (1987), on examination of the national longitudinal database, *High School and Beyond*, find differential access to counseling by socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, aspiration level and ability. Also pertinent are size and location of schools, school resources, and expectations of the community. Access to counseling is thus acting as a social stratifier, possibly magnifying the differences in outcomes of secondary schooling. Students planning to attend college are more likely to seek counseling for planning their high school programs than are students without aspirations for higher education. Hispanics, whose attrition rate is particularly high (Ramon, 1985) and whose expectations of success in completing college are low, make less use of counseling services.

Tracking. Students who lack access to counseling are more likely to be placed in the non-academic curriculum track. Counseling for tracking is necessary at the beginning of a student's high school career, and neglect in this area has caused many students, especially minorities and low-income students, to lack adequate preparation for postsecondary education, thus perpetuating a situation of disadvantage. Choice of track is also tied into expectations. Vocational-track students presumably take coursework to match their career plans, but general track students have the least focus in their curricular programs and require correspondingly more assistance in making wise choices regarding appropriate employment or continuation of education. The Commission on Precollege Guidance and Counseling (1986) recommends that less talented students need to be in more flexible programs, moving up as competency improves and is demonstrated.

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Counseling must interpret to all students what is necessary for postsecondary educational access in order to help students overcome socioeconomic barriers.

Timelines in Precollege Counseling

The Elementary Years. Work with parents on supporting students' belief in their own capacities.

Middle or Junior High School. (1) Develop aspirations and sustain motivation; (2) promote effective study skills (notetaking, memorizing, etc.); (3) aid in clarification of values, decision-making; (4) differentiate among programs and courses, clarifying consequences of choices; (5) discuss graduation requirements, electives, required courses; (6) review testing history, decide on levels of secondary subjects; (7) schedule subjects (family decision) based on testing and academic experiences; (8) introduce guidance resources—counseling services, guidebooks and publications, computer programs, and video systems; and (9) suggest the possibility of college and the availability of financial aid.

Ninth Grade. (1) Schedule family meetings and individual conferences on course decisions; (2) present resource materials; (3) provide access to academic/career/vocational counseling; (4) organize group meetings, college and career planning nights; (5) review academic progress, determine future course selection; and (6) counsel for study skills (time management, memory improvement, filing, and retrieving information).

Tenth Grade. (1) Schedule family meetings on course selection, review of future plans and academic progress; (2) organize group meetings on college/career, financing college education; (3) encourage students to meet college representatives, attend college fairs, career programs, financial aid workshops; (4) provide guidance regarding goal-setting, decision-making, interview skills, testing skills; (5) conduct a writing and speaking curriculum unit; (6) assist in college planning—have students learn about tests, take PSAT/SAT, meet with counselors for test interpretation, obtain counsel regarding test-taking techniques; (7) advise college contacts—visiting college representatives, attending college days, college fairs, career programs; and (8) suggest students write for college materials.

Eleventh Grade. (1) Schedule family meetings on course selection, level determination, postsecondary plans/provisional college choices, planning for college, visiting colleges, financial aid; (2) provide testing and interpretation of results; (3) participate in college search; (4) assist early financial planning activity; (5) recommend students visit college representatives, college fairs, career days, colleges; (6) help plan summer visits, interviews, and receiving promotional literature; (7) have students write for information about admissions and financial aid; and (8) suggest discussions with students presently in college.

Twelfth Grade. (1) Arrange for family to receive schedule of admissions testing dates and additional guidance materials, attend college planning workshops on admissions and financial aid, visit campuses; (2) organize student workshops on college choice, review requirements; (3) have students take tests; (4) encourage students in seeking counsel on college admissions, applications, soliciting references; (5) advise students to speak to college representatives; (6) ensure students complete and submit all admissions and financial aid applications before deadlines; and (7) advise on replying to college responses regarding financial aid.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Commission on Precollege Guidance and Counseling (1986) and the National College Counseling Project (1986) address priorities for the schools in "broadening the frontiers of possibility," recommending: (1) a focus on student needs with college counseling acting as part of a long-term guidance curriculum; (2) attention to appropriate counselor qualities; (3) counselor-principal cooperation and faculty enlistment; (4) parent and family involvement; (5) emphasis on early and middle years, especially for underserved students; (6) collaboration with various colleges and community resources; (7) development of state-wide plans to address student needs; (8) support of federal programs helping disadvantaged students; (9) a focus on financial aid initiatives; and (10) revision of school counselor training.

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ERIC DIGEST

RURAL EDUCATION

EDO-RC-88-08

PREPARING RURAL STUDENTS FOR AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

The transition from youth to adulthood is difficult for many, traumatic for some. The stress experienced during the rites of passage can be severely exacerbated for persons who must simultaneously make the transition from a rural to urban environment. Although education is often viewed as preparation for adulthood, education in a rural setting often neglects adequate preparation for those who, by choice or necessity, will move to a metropolitan area for work or for further education.

The number of rural students wishing to relocate in urban areas is considerable. In a study of high school seniors in rural communities of Utah, Seyfrit (1986) found that nearly 80 percent planned to migrate soon after graduation, regardless of the availability of jobs in the rural area. From her own research and review of related studies, Seyfrit concludes that "youth may be so prone to migrate after high school graduation that economic opportunities have little to do with their migration decision." Preparing students for that move thus becomes an important responsibility for educators.

Much of this digest is based on Preparing Rural Youth for an Urban Environment: A Handbook for Educators, by Vaughn and Vaughn, a valuable resource for preparing rural students for a move to work and learn in an urban setting. The Handbook touches briefly upon and suggests appropriate learning activities for almost every aspect of preparing for and adjusting to a dramatic change in environment and lifestyle. Many of the learning activities are appropriate for assisting students in the transition from youth to adulthood, regardless of location. Thus, the learning activities are suitable for almost all high school students. The activities can be used in a separate course, integrated into existing courses, or applied in counseling.

Success Depends on Personal Characteristics and Values

The ability of a person to adjust to a dramatically different environment depends to a large degree on personal characteristics and values. Inventories of personality traits, values, lifestyle, and family orientation can be developed individually, in classroom groups, and in discussion with family and friends. The manner and extent to which these characteristics, values, and patterns are embedded in the rural environment and the degree to which they may be disrupted by moving to a metropolitan area--by, for example, being ruled more by the clock than the sun--are important considerations in preparing rural youth for transition to an urban environment.

Life in a rural climate is often characterized as relaxed, friendly, and warm. The urban atmosphere is often described as hurried, harried, and cold. These characteristics are frequently reflected in different language patterns and personal mannerisms which can instantly classify a person as an "outsider" and thus make adjustment a difficult task. Activities to increase assertiveness and to adopt language habits and personal mannerisms appropriate to the city are important in the preparation process. Making decisions in a familiar, supportive environment is one thing; similar decisions in an unfamiliar situation without a support group can be devastating. Learning activities to increase students' feeling of control over their lives will aid in preparing for transition.

Getting and Keeping a Job

Economic conditions frequently force young people to move from rural to urban areas for employment. A high priority task, on arrival, is

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getting a job. Appropriate preparation before the move will greatly improve the probability of both finding a job and finding one well suited to the individual. Preparation includes assessment of abilities, skills, interests, attributes, and previous work experience. Preparation includes practice in completing application forms, preparing letters of interest and resumes, and learning about appropriate dress and grooming. Preparation may include mock videotaped interviews, perhaps with the personnel officer from a city business, with critique by fellow classmembers. Preparation also includes study of job availability in the target city and analyses of how various jobs match individual skills and interests.

Numerous resources are available for developing job-hunting skills: city newspapers, telephone directories, and publications from the Chamber of Commerce and the Employment Security Commission. Family members and friends who reside in the city can be tapped for employment information. Small businesses tend to use informal means of filling positions; personal contacts are thus an important means of finding employment. Building networking skills through family and friends can be vital to job-hunting.

Preparation for keeping a job is as important as preparation for getting a job. Expectations--both employers' and employees'--can be discussed. Asking questions, learning about getting along with supervisors and coworkers, and assessing others' attitudes are important exercises in preparation for keeping a job. Timeliness, a day's work for a day's pay, and remaining within the assigned area of responsibility (at least initially) are important in keeping a job.

Getting along is important at first; in time, getting ahead--the promotion--becomes important. Learning related tasks, learning about the company's organization and procedures, and taking related courses at the local postsecondary school are helpful in getting promoted.

Adjusting to an Urban Lifestyle

The workplace is only one part of life in the city. Home life and leisure activities are important aspects of urban living. Preparation in these areas is an appropriate high school activity.

Finding an appropriate place to live is almost as important as finding a job. Ideally, the place is convenient to work, shopping, and entertainment, served by good transportation, and affordable. A map of the city, telephone books, and classified ads from the city's newspapers are excellent resources in planning a search for the right housing.

Planning for appropriate leisure activities before the move can be rewarding. Chamber of Commerce brochures and the city map and telephone book are excellent resources for planning affordable leisure activities. Urban areas offer a large variety of activities and there are clubs and organizations associated with almost every activity from acting and bicycling to rockhounding and skiing. Some companies sponsor clubs and sports teams.

Despite the best plans, there are those who will find themselves in trouble. Contingency planning is appropriate before the move away from home. Knowing the kinds of service agencies available in time of trouble or crisis and how to contact them can be a valuable preparatory activity. Services can be located through newspapers and telephone books and include agencies for abuse, rape and suicide hotlines, pregnancy and birth control, family counseling, legal aid, medical referrals, low or no-cost household items, child care, and police assistance.

Adjusting to Urban Higher Education

In his review of the literature, Brown (1985) cites a number of studies that indicate that rural students in higher education have a higher attrition rate then their urban counterparts. This difference may not be attributable to lower academic achievement. Some studies find that rural students do as well as their urban counter-parts; others indicate that rural students do less well. Lower achievement--when it occurs--may be due, in part, says Brown, to limited access to appropriate course offerings in high school and lack of social and interpersonal interactions. The social system--low economic status, low family expectations, and a perception of limited options--also contributes to the rural dropout rate.

In one examination of rural Kansas high school students who attended college, Downey (1980) found that rural youth have limited occupational role models, have limited views of occupational opportunities, and tend to select from familiar areas.

In a study of freshmen attending the

University of Colorado, Aylesworth and Bloom (1976) found that "the rural freshman going away to college is not distinguishable intellectually from the urban freshman" and received equivalent college grades. Rural students, nevertheless, had a lower survival rate. Factors such as rural students' low socioeconomic origins, greater likelihood of carrying a full-time work load with classes, and larger difficulty in procuring financial aid and work study assignments all increased the possibility of attrition. Not surprisingly, rural students mentioned problems which reflected high levels of stress and alienation--problems of dealing with campus size and impersonality, developing good study habits, and finding other students who were culturally similar and/or friendly.

The recommendations of Brown and of Aylesworth and Bloom suggest that there are high school learning activities that can help students cope with the stress of leaving home and attending college. Many of these activities are the same as those designed to assist rural students migrating to urban areas for employment.

Realistic Budgeting

It is the experience of the author of this digest that many persons moving from a rural to an urban environment have little concept of the associated costs and may therefore be in severe financial difficulties within a short time of arrival. A realistic budget is an important aspect of adjusting to an urban lifestyle. The cost of living--housing, food, clothing, entertainment, transportation, utilities, taxes, insurance--is often significantly higher in urban than in rural areas. And net income may be less than expected.

An excellent high school preparatory activity is to develop a budget of current income and expenditures which is then extended to an urban setting, using estimates of income and expenditures. The urban budget will generally include items that are not included in the current budget of a high school student.

In developing the urban budget, realistic anticipated wages must be used and gross wages must be reduced by payroll deductions: federal, state, and local withholding taxes, social security, union dues, and employee contributions to retirement and insurance plans. Take-home pay may be as much as 30 percent less than gross earnings. Employer-provided benefits may be limited. If health insurance, for example, is not provided, the cost of health insurance or medical expenses must be budgeted and paid out of take-home pay. Projected revenue must consider such factors as whether the anticipated job is full- or part-time, seasonal, or cyclical. Some jobs pay well on an hourly basis, but employment may not be full-time, year-round.

Typical wage rates may be obtained from classified ads in the city's newspapers, from the Employment Security Commission, and from the catalogs of vocational programs offered at vocational schools and community colleges. Costs of housing, food, clothing, and entertainment may be obtained from newspapers. Utility companies can provide data on utility costs. Other expenses, such as medical, may have to be estimated.

In sticking to a budget, it is useful to keep track of all expenditures--every last penny. Variance between expenditures and the budget should result in adjustments to the budget or the expenditure pattern. High expenditures should be examined closely. The cost of eating lunch out compared to brown bagging, for example, can be substantial.

An excellent personal money management workbook, Common Cent$, has been developed by Lawrence (1984). Included are monthly budget and expenditure worksheets, installment payment records, credit card purchase records, monthly expense records, a year-end summary, and a net worth statement.

Choosing to Be a Rural Entrepreneur

If jobs are scarce in the rural community but a move to the city is not desired, entrepreneurship may provide an alternative. The entrepreneur, of course, must be skilled in the goods or services to be provided. In addition, the entrepreneur must be skilled in basic accounting, financial records and reports, marketing, advertising, pricing, hiring and personnel management, payroll and payroll taxes, and the variety of reports that must be made to federal, state, and local governments. Certificates or licenses may be required. Sanitation inspections may be imposed. Safety and health requirements are often mandated. Capital may be needed to get the business under way. Personal savings, family, and friends may provide capital, but bankers are often unwilling to lend money to the inexperienced entrepreneur. A business plan is essential. The entrepreneur who is without a plan or who fails to follow and update the plan as necessary is likely doomed to an early failure.

A guiding principle, particularly for the young, inexperienced entrepreneur, is start small. It is often helpful to have another job as a source of income while the business is getting on its feet. The Teenage Entrepreneur's Guide; 50 Money-Making Business Ideas by Riehm is particularly helpful. The student who plans on going into business should take advantage of every opportunity to learn, plan, and gain the requisite skills while still in high school.

Summary

High school commencement is a time of significant change: deliverance from the known, predictable world of school to the uncertainties of the "real world," emergence from youth to adulthood, and, for many students in rural communities, a transition to urban environments. The differences between rural and metropolitan areas are significant; substantial accommodations are necessary to adjust to cosmopolitan surroundings. Appropriate preparatory activities in high school can ease the transition. Skills with which to cope with and adjust to urban procedures and mores as well as knowledge about metropolitan opportunities and obstacles can be learned through the high school curriculum.

Many of the skills needed for a satisfactory transition to urban living are useful for successful transition from youth to adulthood. Learning activities for one are often appropriate to the other--and are therefore appropriate to high school students whether or not a move to the city is contemplated. Continued, substantial migration of youth, however, can be expected. Whether the moves are for economic reasons or for postsecondary education, rural high schools will serve students well with learning activities that prepare them for the move.

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Preparing students to take standardized achievement tests

William A. Mehrens, Michigan State University

As a school administrator, you know that the public often favors accountability in education and believes that holding teachers responsible for students' achievement will result in better education. Many people assume that the best data about students' levels of achievement come from standardized achievement tests. Although scores from these tests are undoubtedly useful for accountability purposes, educators recognize that such data have some limitations.

Teaching to the test

One major concern about standardized achievement tests is that when test scores are used to make important decisions, teachers may teach to the test too directly. Although teaching to the test is not a new concern, today's greater emphasis on teacher accountability can make this practice more likely to occur.

Depending on how it is done, teaching to the test can be either productive or counterproductive. Therefore, you need to carefully consider how you prepare students to take standardized achievement tests.

At some point, legitimate teaching to the test can cross an ill-defined line and become inappropriate teaching of the test (Shepard and Kreitzer, 1987). Educators may disagree about what specific activities are inappropriate. However, it may be useful to describe a continuum and to identify several points located along it.

Seven points on the continuum

Mehrens and Kaminski (1989) suggest the following descriptive points:

1. giving general instruction on district objectives without referring to the objectives that the standardized tests measure;
2. teaching test-taking skills;
3. providing instruction on objectives where objectives may have been determined by looking at the objectives that a variety of standardized tests measure (The objectives taught may or may not contain objectives on teaching test-taking skills.);
4. providing instruction based on objectives (skills and subskills) that specifically match those on the standardized test to be administered;
5. providing instruction on specifically matched objectives (skills and subskills) where the practice or instruction follows the same format as the test questions;
6. providing practice or instruction on a published parallel form of the same test; and
7. providing practice or instruction on the test itself.

Mehrens and Kaminski suggest that:

- Point 1 is always ethical and Points 6 and 7 are never ethical.
- Point 2 is typically considered ethical.

Thus, the point at which you cross over from a legitimate to an illegitimate practice on the continuum is somewhere between Points 3 and 5. The location of the point changes depending on the inferences you want to make from the test scores.

What you can infer from test scores

> *The only reasonable, direct inference you can make from a test score is the degree to which a student knows the content that the test samples. Any inference about why the student knows that content to that degree. . . is clearly a weaker inference. . .* (Mehrens, 1984, p. 10).

Teaching to the test alters what you can interpret from test scores because it involves teaching specific content. Therefore, it also weakens the direct inference that can be reasonably drawn about students' knowledge. Rarely would you want to limit your inference about knowledge to the specific questions asked in a specific format. Generally, you want to make inferences about a broader domain of skills.

Further complicating matters, many people wish to use test scores to draw **indirect** inferences about why students score the way they do. Indirect inferences can lead to weaker and possibly incorrect interpretations about school programs.

Indirect inferences cannot possibly be accurate unless the direct **inference of student achievement is made to the correct domain.** Rarely does one wish to limit the inference about knowledge to the specific questions in a test or even the specific objectives tested. For example, if parents want to infer how well their children will do in another school next year, they need to make inferences about the broader domain and not about the specific objectives that are tested on a particular standardized test. For that inference to be accurate, the instruction must not be limited to the narrow set of objectives of a given test. Thus, for the most typical inferences, the line demarking legitimate and illegitimate teaching of the test must be drawn between Points 3 and 4.

While in my view it is inappropriate to prepare students by focusing on the sample of objectives that happen to be tested, you can undertake appropriate activities to prepare students to take standardized tests.

Appropriate activities to prepare students

Ligon and Jones suggest that an appropriate activity for preparing students for standardized testing is:

> *one which contributes to students' performing on the test near their true achievement levels, and one which contributes more to their scores than would an equal amount of regular classroom instruction* (1982, p. 1).

Matter suggests that:

> *Ideally, test preparation activities should not be additional activities imposed upon teachers. Rather, they should be incorporated into the regular, ongoing instructional activities whenever possible.* (1986, p. 10)

If you follow the suggestion by Ligon and Jones, you might spend some time teaching students general test-taking skills. These skills would help students answer questions correctly if they have mastered the objectives. Without some level of test-taking skills, even knowledgeable students could miss an item (or a set of items) because they did not understand the mechanics of taking a test.

Summary

Although the temptation exists to teach too closely to the test, teachers should not be pressured to do so. In fact, you should try to ensure that they do not do so.

The inferences you typically wish to draw from test scores are general in nature and will be inaccurate if you limit instruction to the actual objectives sampled in the test or, worse yet, to the actual questions on the test. However, it is appropriate to spend some instructional time teaching test-taking skills. Such skills are relatively easy to teach and should take up very little instructional time.

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ERIC DIGEST No. 72

Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

PREVENTING OBSOLESCENCE THROUGH ADULT RETRAINING

Rapid technological changes, dramatic shifts in labor force distribution, and the increasing pressures of foreign competition have made the dangers of skill obsolescence and eventual job loss a reality for many American workers. Moreover, there is every likelihood that the need for retraining will continue to increase. Economic security is coming to depend less on expertise and more on flexibility (Perelman 1984). This ***ERIC Digest*** examines why past responses to skill obsolescence are no longer sufficient, describes the elements that should be included in a comprehensive program to prevent skill obsolescence, and proposes appropriate roles of business, labor, and government in retraining.

Why Are Retraining Programs Needed?

In the past, employer-provided, job-specific training for new employees and continuing education for those who wished to advance in their jobs were often sufficient to keep abreast of technological changes. When automation resulted in massive labor market shifts, the solution to worker dislocation was often relocation. However, large-scale layoffs and plant closings in the last two decades have focused attention on reeducation and retraining. The rapid pace of technological advancement, the shrinking supply of entry-level workers, and the increasing complexity and abstractness of many jobs coupled with lower levels of general education among labor market entrants made it imperative that more attention be paid to the issue of preventing skill obsolescence among American workers.

After analyzing many successful and unsuccessful retraining and worker relocation programs, Gordus, Gohrband, and Meiland (1987) drew a distinction between "reactive" responses to changing job skill requirements (i.e., retraining programs that are begun only after massive permanent layoffs and plant closings have occurred) and "active" retraining programs that anticipate future skill deficits and provide training to upgrade workers' skills before jobs are lost and plants are forced to close.

Benefits of an Active Approach to Retraining

Gordus et al. (1987) demonstrated that even exemplary programs begun only after workers' skills have become obsolete and their jobs have been lost are expensive ($800 to $3,500 per participant for vocational skills training) and their outcomes vary widely (the placement rates from six demonstration sites of a model economic readjustment assistance program ranged from 9 to 81 percent) (p. 13). Time is another crucial factor. Effective retraining programs—whether remedial or intended to teach workers new skills—take time to plan and implement. Program providers who must initiate retraining programs after workers have been dislocated do not have time to engage in long-term planning, and unemployed persons are often unwilling to participate in lengthy retraining programs. Because they do not have such time constraints, ongoing retraining programs geared toward persons who are currently employed can be more carefully planned and presented.

By anticipating what skills their workers will need in the future, employers can prepare their present employees to respond to changing demands imposed by technological advances and thereby avoid the disruption in operations and added expenses related to recruiting, hiring, and training new employees. Workplace retraining programs also benefit employees by increasing their basic skills, enhancing their employability, improving their job performance, and providing them with the skills needed to perform new jobs and adapt to new technologies (Gordus, Gohrband, and Meiland 1987).

Who Should Provide the Retraining?

Business, labor unions, and government can all play a role in funding and/or providing retraining. Funders can make their influence felt by selecting the training provider and shaping the content of training. Of course, funders retain the most control over a program when they provide the training themselves rather than paying an independent institution to provide educational services. Employers who provide their own training can increase the incentive for employees to participate in retraining by making the instruction relevant to employees' work experiences. According to Gordus et al. (1987), the most successful programs, in terms of postprogram wage raises, are those operated by employers and unions. Federal, state, and local government funding can be combined with union or business funds to varying extents.

The National Alliance of Business (1987) described the following examples of ways in which public funds can be used in privately run retraining programs to prevent skill obsolescence among persons who are currently employed.

- Funds provided by the state of Michigan's Upgrade Program are used to train Frost, Inc. employees in the use of flexible manufacturing systems. As an added incentive, employees are given the opportunity to purchase home computers at half price.
- The National Technological University's degree program offers management seminars accredited by the North Central Association of Universities and several Master of Science degrees via satellite-transmitted training through a network of 24 universities.
- In Delaware, funds provided through the Blue Collar Jobs Act of 1984 are used to pay part of the costs for customized training that is tailored to companies' written specifications. Trainers are paid half before training is provided and half after it has been satisfactorily completed.
- At the Alabama Center for Quality and Productivity, a governor-appointed seven-person board guides curriculum development to ensure that it is responsive to business needs and helps market the program. The center operates on land donated by General Motors and has trained 3,000 GM staff in quality control.

What Should a Retraining Program Include?

The content of a workplace retraining program depends largely on the specific skill needs of the individual industry or company in which the program participants are employed. Gordus et al. (1987) identified the following program elements, which may be used in different combinations to meet the needs of individual employers and employees:

- A counseling/educational guidance component that provides adults with the information and skills required to develop an action plan for their own career and educational development
- An assessment system (as nonthreatening as possible) that enables educational institutions and employers to determine where training and upgrading are needed
- A support system that provides such elements as tuition assistance, time off from work for learning, a study site within the workplace, child care, and recognition of the program participants' achievements
- A basic skills program (which may require another name so as to avoid any stigma that may be attached to employees' need for remediation)
- A vocational skills program (which should integrate learning with practical application in the workplace to the greatest extent possible)
- A general skills program that includes communication and organizational skills
- Management development programs (p. 50)

Other elements were identified in a study of ways to persuade those in fields of declining opportunities to take advantage of retraining (Miskovic 1987). The study found that workers have a limited perspective of the workplace, do not judge a job on the basis of its potential as a career path, and are adverse to taking risks. Recommendations to overcome these barriers include the following:

- Take the program down to the personal level
- Confront specific problems and concerns
- Ensure a short time frame
- Talk in terms of options and opportunities
- Create a central source of help and information

Features of Successful Retraining Programs

Educational aspects aside, the success or failure of collaborative programs to prevent skill obsolescence can depend on the way in which a partnership is established and the way in which a program is organized. Gordus et al. (1987) listed the following actions as being crucial to the success of retraining partnerships:

- Identification of differences between educational and corporate institutions in terms of their missions, goals, and climate so that respect for differences can be developed and supported
- Identification of mutual goals and objectives
- Clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities
- Multiple contacts among many levels of the organization so that knowledge of each other's plans and problems can be acquired
- Careful communication on both sides, including the development and maintenance of information-sharing procedures
- Flexibility based on trust and knowledge of what can and cannot be accomplished in each organization
- Rapid responses to concerns and complaints from all partners
- Development of a reward and recognition system for learners and for persons working on the programs

Diverse as the many types of retraining program partnerships may be, it is important that they include a mix of general employability and job-specific skills to prepare program participants to adapt to future workplace changes that cannot as yet be predicted with certainty.

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Protecting Children from Inappropriate Practices

Sue Bredekamp and Lorrie Shepard

Early childhood educators need to devote energy and commitment to resisting inappropriate practices for children. Policies such as using readiness testing, holding younger children out of school, or raising entrance age are at best short-term solutions, and at worst, harm children and contribute to inappropriate expectations.

All children deserve the best education possible, and schools and teachers must be accountable for providing high quality instruction and recognizing and adapting instruction when children fail to learn. But the use of standardized test scores as the predominant indicator of accountability is ill-advised. There is increasing evidence that when test scores take on too much political importance in schools, scores can go up without an actual increase in student learning (Shepard, 1989). We need alternative strategies that ensure excellence, equity, and accountability. Here are some suggestions to help guide educators in making decisions.

Making Decisions about Entrance and Placement

Avoid use of standardized tests for entry to school or promotion in primary grades.

Establish a uniform kindergarten entrance age whereby most children attending kindergarten are 5 years old and most first graders are 6. Accept children for school on the basis of their chronological age and legal right to enter.

Use valid developmental screening tests as a first step in identifying children who may need further diagnosis of a health, learning, or developmental handicap (Meisels, 1985).

Use valid standardized tests as one of many sources of information needed for a complete diagnosis of a child's special needs or the cause of a child's problem, and appropriate intervention and remediation strategies (Meisels, 1987).

Evaluating Programs' Accomplishment of Goals

Avoid use of standardized achievement testing of all children until at least third grade. When standardized achievement test scores are used in third grade as accountability measures and for comparisons of schools and districts, don't test all children; rather, use sampling to obtain the same results. This is cost effective and does not label individual children. Conduct the test in the fall of the year to prevent teaching to the test and evaluating teachers with test scores.

Develop alternative assessment instruments and procedures that can be used instead of standardized tests. These include oral tapes of children's stories or reading progress and portfolios of students' writing and artwork. Recognize that currently available standardized tests provide very limited measures of school and student success and become invalid if children are drilled on questions that are just like the test items.

Increase the use of systematic observation of teacher and student performance, and documentation of sources of evidence of children's progress for use in curriculum planning, evaluation, and reporting to parents. Increase the use of measures that assess children's strengths and deficits.

Planning and Individualizing Curriculum and Instruction

Use developmentally appropriate teaching methods to individualize instruction. For example, when children work in learning centers or in small groups on projects, ensure that the teacher is free to work with individual children and use techniques such as peer tutoring, coaching, and individual progress that use group heterogeneity as an instructional asset.

Clarify the terminology used to describe inappropriate practices. While in some ways an escalated curriculum expects too much and is too fast for the age group, in other ways it expects too little. Emphasis on drill and practice and worksheet-dictated curriculum is "shockingly unstimulating to children and fails to extend their thinking" (NASBE, 1988, p. 4). Young children can engage in problem solving before they know addition and in sophisticated reasoning and questioning about stories before they can decode words, provided that opportunities are provided in ways that are meaningful to children's level of understanding (Peterson, 1989).

Promoting Appropriate Policies

Encourage concerned parents to join together and complain about inappropriate practices and policies. When children's rights are violated by testing abuses, vocal parents are the most effective agents of change.

Enhance collegiality within schools and all sectors of the early childhood profession. Encourage teachers and administrators to join professional early childhood organizations.

Use the many valuable tools available to advocate appropriate practices in all early childhood programs. Some of the position statements that strongly support sound practices for young children are:

- American Federation of Teachers. (1988). "Standardized Testing in Kindergarten. 1988 Convention Policy Resolution." In *AFT Convention Report* (pp. 58-59). Washington, DC.
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Position statements are being developed by the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the National Center for Clinical Infant Programs, and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Conclusion

The early childhood profession must first increase its degree of consensus about these issues, then act with one voice to influence policy. The next step in the early childhood profession's process of articulating standards for appropriate practice is the development of guidelines for appropriate curriculum content and assessment in the early childhood unit, prekindergarten through third grade. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), in collaboration with the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education and other national organizations and experts, is working on this project. (Guidelines for appropriate content and assessment in the early childhood unit, prekindergarten through third grade, will be available from NAEYC in 1991.)

This digest was adapted from an article titled, "How Best to Protect Children from Inappropriate School Expectations, Practices, and Policies," which appeared in *Young Children* (March, 1989): 14-24.

For More Information:

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ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management

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RACISM IN AMERICA'S SCHOOLS

By Richard Beswick

An eight-year-old black girl in South Africa recently told Ted Koppel on Nightline, "White people are better than black people. Whites know more, have more, and get more. I wish I was white but I am not." American children of color do not have to contend with apartheid, but they still do not live in a prejudice-free society.

A quarter century of desegregation has not yet solved the self-deprecation, low levels of educational performance, or overall quality of life for America's people of color. Racism in any measure undermines children's self-esteem and erodes the educational process.

What role can schools play in combatting racism? As children grow up racist, the schools still have a chance to reeducate them. Some exemplary schools are training students to create a climate of antiracist peer pressure. And in a growing number of schools, new curricula promoting racial and ethnic awareness through multicultural education are turning diversity into opportunity.

What is racism?

Racism is a developed set of attitudes that include antagonism based on the supposed superiority of one group or on the supposed inferiority of another group, premised solely on skin color or race. Some authors suggest that racism and white racism may be synonymous. Defining bigotry as a primarily white problem does disservice in two ways. It ignores the fact that racist attitudes can breed in any ethnic group and it undermines the expressed goals of this decade's most promising solution—multicultural education. Celebration of diversity is a better foundation for racial harmony than is class guilt, says Charles Glenn (1989).

How do racial attitudes form?

Kenneth Clarke (in Mock 1988) details the developmental phases of racial attitudes in children. By age two, a child notices color differences. In the next two to four years, the child begins to identify with his or her own racial group. At that point she forms preference patterns on the basis of the prevailing attitude within the group and not by contact with a racially different group.

Parents are the earliest and most powerful source of racial attitudes (positive or negative), while peers run a close second (Savard and Aragon 1989). By the early grades every child carries at least some stereotyping.

Institutional and cultural prejudices are more subtle because they are embedded in unexamined assumptions and established procedures. The roots of these are multigenerational and can persist even after years of legislative remedies.

How extensive is racism in public schools?

In the progressively liberal, mostly white community of Eugene, Oregon, a study (Savard and Aragon) found that racism exists and may be on the increase. The report stressed the frequency of racial jokes and slurs, derogatory racial stereotyping, and (less often) violent acts left unpunished by school authorities.

Augustine Garcia (1989) notes that our innercities and areas of high density immigration (California, Florida) are experiencing the intimidation and irrational violence of Neo-Nazi skinheads and racial gangs. Children from dysfunctional families are particularly susceptible to peer pressure to adopt a racist posture.

It is not just the condescension and violence exhibited toward minorities that must be taken into account when looking at incidents of racism. Restrictions on minorities' opportunity to succeed are often racially determined. For example, Asian-Americans incur resentment for academic excellence and "overachieving." If racism is explicit at the street level of society, it is often implicit and equally entrenched at the highest levels.

How is racial prejudice reversed?

In addition to deeper curricular remedies, it is important to declare a public repugnance for racism. One such declaration, the Racism Free Zone, has been effective in Lane County, Oregon, schools. Developed by Clergy and Laity Concerned and modified from the Nuclear Free Zone concept, this program begins with a formal day of celebration. A plaque is prominently displayed that reads in part:

> We will not make statements or symbols indicating racial prejudice. Freedom of speech does not extend to hurting others. Racism will not be tolerated and action will be taken to ensure this.

White students acquire a feeling of ownership for this zone of protection, and minority students report a feeling of security and pride.

Far more ambitious is Project Reach, developed by the Arlington, Washington, School District (1986). This four-phased experience takes mostly white communities through human relations skills, cultural self-awareness, multicultural training, and cross-cultural encounters. Students research their own heritage to learn the fundamentals of culture; study other cultures through specially prepared booklets on black, Asian, Mexican, and native American heritages; and participate in field trips. Because Project Reach was developed for mostly white communities, it has received some national criticism for being too removed from practical racial cooperation. But given the demographic realities, communities must begin someplace.

Teachers can build tolerance in early childhood, says Barbara James Thompson (1989), by "role-playing a bus boycott, choosing the unknown contents of a beautiful box and a dirty box, and by encountering discriminatory signs in classroom activity." Such object lessons point out the hidden values in the child's assumptions and provide role-models worth emulating.

Resources for teaching about racism are listed by

Samuel Totten (1989). These materials teach about the "destructive effects of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination."

How can administrators prevent racism?

Educators can employ several strategic, motivational, and confrontational means to change racist behavior. The following list incorporates some steps that have been proved effective (Diane Pollard 1989, Lloyd Foster 1989, James VanSciver 1989, and others).

1. Articulate a clear statement of expectations regarding racism.
2. Establish and enforce a series of consequences for violations of those expectations.
3. Respond to racial incidents quickly and fairly by gathering adequate evidence. Correction should be remedial.
4. Discourage students from congregating on the school grounds according to race.
5. Design seating assignments with a priority on integration.
6. Rely on peer counseling whenever possible.
7. Seek advice and support from parent and student advisory boards.
8. Enlist the help and advice of key minority leaders in the community for teacher workshops, assemblies, and arbitration of racial incidents when appropriate.
9. Reward those who strive to reduce racism in their schools and classrooms.
10. Hire and assign an appropriate balance of minority faculty and staff to act as role-models and provide an adequate base of authority for policies and discipline.

In addition, Kofi Lomotey (1989) advises school principals to communicate to teachers that *all* students can learn, focus on programs helping marginal students, broaden the base of recognized achievement by praising nontraditional work, and honor satisfactory work that represents an all-out effort by minority students.

How can schools preserve ethnic identity in the context of racial integration?

It is unnecessary to force a choice between integration of schools and the preservation of ethnic identity. In the Rafael Hernandez School in Boston, students work on shared learning tasks in the target language (English) without a double standard of performance expectations, says Charles Glenn (1989). Hispanics, blacks, and whites also work on Spanish and receive a positive message of its cultural value through drama and creative writing.

Of comparable importance are the programs, such as those offered by magnet schools, that encourage minorities to choose fields of math, science, and computer technology. The EQUALS program designs materials that help parents as well as teachers provide the motivation for minorities to excel in these areas (Hart and Lumsden 1989).

Glenn believes that a misunderstanding about the meaning of ethnicity and culture accounts for the reluctance of some educators to risk tampering with ethnic heritage. Ethnicity has to do with generational heritage and history. Culture, on the other hand, is the ideas, customs, and art of a people's living present. Culture is not static but rather a dynamic context for social life that all people have a right to shape. Multicultural education must distinguish between culture and ethnicity if it is to preserve minorities' ethnic identities while freeing them to participate fully in shaping the culture of society.

When these two concepts—ethnicity and culture—are made indistinct, schools can become encumbered with new stereotypes. Cultural relativity is the logical outcome. In this view, equal value is posited for all cultural and religious expressions. In contrast, good education allows students to pursue objective criteria for determining what is good or bad, valuable or useless in any particular culture. Racism *may* affect the way one regards another's culture or religion. But it does not follow that every articulated cultural or religious preference is racist.

Educators have gained many insights into the nature of racism. Multicultural education provides some excellent measures to root out prejudice and to foster appreciation for racial and ethnic differences.

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ERIC
Digest

Readiness for Kindergarten

Joanne R. Nurss

What social, language, perceptual, and motor skills do 5-year-olds need to be ready for kindergarten? What effect does the kindergarten curriculum have on a child's readiness? Is chronological age a factor? What is expected by the end of kindergarten?

Introduction

Readiness is a term used to describe preparation for what comes next: readiness for kindergarten involves both the child and the instructional situation. Any consideration of the preparation a child needs to be successful in kindergarten must take into account the kindergarten program and the teacher's expectations of the child.

Social and Behavioral Expectations

Kindergarten teachers expect that children will be able to function within a cooperative learning environment in which the child works both independently and in small and large groups. Children are expected to be able to attend to and finish a task, listen to a story in a group, follow two or three oral directions, take turns and share, and care for their belongings. They are also expected to follow rules, respect the property of others, and work within the time and space constraints of the school program. It is important that children learn to distinguish between work and play, knowing when and where each is appropriate within the definition of each (Bradley, 1984; LeCompte, 1980).

Sensory-Motor Expectations

Teachers expect children to develop certain physical skills before they enter kindergarten. Children are expected to have mastered many large muscle skills, such as walking, running, and climbing, and fine motor skills requiring eye-hand coordination, such as use of a pencil, crayons, or scissors. Fine motor skills are used when the child begins to write its name and to make attempts at written expression. It is assumed that children have acquired both visual and auditory discrimination of objects and sounds. Such discrimination skills will be used to learn the names and sounds of letters and the names and quantities of numerals. Children are expected to have developed the concepts of same and different, so that they can sort objects into groups whose members are alike in some way. Usually the kindergarten teacher expects the children to recognize and name colors, shapes, sizes, and their own names (even though these concepts are often part of the curriculum early in the school year).

Cognitive and Language Expectations

Most five-year-olds can express themselves fluently with a variety of words and can understand an even larger variety of words used in conversations and stories. If children have been exposed to books and heard stories read and told, they have begun to develop an interest in what print says and how it is used to express ideas; a concept of story and story structure; and an understanding of the relationship between oral and written language.

Chronological Age

Many school systems and states have raised the entrance age for kindergarten in hopes that the older age of the class will increase the likelihood of the children's success. However, research does not support this action. Most studies show that chronological age alone is not a factor in kindergarten success (Meisels, 1987; Wood, 1984).

Kindergarten Curriculum

Many children now have a prior group experience in nursery school, prekindergarten, or day care. In the past, when kindergarten was the child's initial school experience, its focus was on the child's social adjustment to school. Kindergarten was usually a half-day program whose curriculum and activities were separate from the rest of the school, and whose purpose was to prepare the child for first grade. Now kindergarten is an integral part of the elementary school's curriculum, and the focus has shifted from social to cognitive or academic (Nurss and Hodges, 1982). Many states fund full-day kindergarten programs on the assumption that 5-year-olds can benefit from a longer school experience. Kindergartners vary in the degree to which their cognitive skills are strengthened through a developmentally oriented program with language-based, concrete activities. In many kindergartens, language, cognitive, sensory-motor, and social-emotional skills are addressed through play. Small group instruction, learning centers, and whole group language activities are used as systematic, planned opportunities for children to develop in all areas.

In some cases, however, the kindergarten uses structured, whole group, paper-and-pencil activities oriented to academic subjects, such as reading and mathematics. The curriculum in these kindergartens often constitutes a downward extension of the primary grade curriculum and may call for the use of workbooks which are part of a primary level textbook series. Many early childhood professionals have spoken out on the inappropriateness of such a curriculum and have urged widespread adoption of a developmentally appropriate curriculum (Bredekamp, 1986).

The question of readiness for kindergarten depends in part on which type of program the child enters. Different approaches to reading and writing, for example, make different demands on a young child. A child may be ready for one type of instructional program, but not another.

A further issue is that of the expectations of the teachers and school system for what the child will accomplish by the end of kindergarten. As expectations become more academic and assessments more formal (for example, standardized tests that compare children to a national sample of kindergarten children) pressure increases to retain children who do not meet expectations or to place them in a transition class between kindergarten and first grade. The assumption is that children who have not achieved a minimum level of cognitive and academic skills prior to first grade will benefit from another year of kindergarten. While that may be true for some, it is not true for many others (Shepard, 1987). Developmentally appropriate programs assume that children vary upon entrance; that all children progress during the program at their own rate and in their own manner; and that children will continue to vary at the end of the program.

Conclusion

Readiness for kindergarten depends on a child's development of social, perceptual, motor, and language skills expected by the teacher. It also depends on the curriculum's degree of structure, the behavior required by the instructional program, and expectations of what is to be achieved by the end of the program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Digest

DIGEST #E495
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READINGS AND RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS OF GIFTED CHILDREN

Books Containing General Information About Gifted and Talented Students, 1985–1989

Borland, J. H. (1989). *Planning and implementing programs for the gifted.* A comprehensive examination of and guide to issues and practices related to developing programs for gifted students. New York: Teachers College Press.

Clark, B. (1988). *Growing up gifted* (3rd ed.). This comprehensive reference is divided into three major sections: understanding the gifted individual, the school and the gifted individual, and resources. Includes sections on brain research, the emotional and social aspects of growing up gifted, and current educational models. Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Coleman, L. J. (1985). *Schooling the gifted.* A general reference divided into two parts: development and identification (giftedness, guidance considerations, and creativity), and educational practices (administrative arrangements, curriculum, instructional strategies). Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley.

Cox, J., Daniel, N., & Boston, B. O. (1985). *Educating able learners.* The result of a 4-year comprehensive national study of programming; provides a broad database, looks at the backgrounds of creative individuals, and examines programs with a record of success. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Davis, G. A., & Rimm, S. B. (1989). *Education of the gifted and talented* (2nd ed.). Provides a broad overview of the field, including an introduction to giftedness, characteristics, programs, identification, and program evaluation. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Feldhusen, J., VanTassel-Baska, J., & Seeley, K. (1989). *Excellence in educating the gifted.* Well-known authors provide a comprehensive view of giftedness. Divided into four parts: individual differences and special populations; program development and evaluation; curriculum and instruction; and achievement of excellence. Denver: Love Publishing.

Gallagher, J. J. (1985). *Teaching the gifted child* (3rd ed). A classic comprehensive text divided into five general parts: broad overview of gifted students and their needs; content modifications in specific academic areas; productive thinking and creativity; administration and training; and special problem areas such as gifted underachievers and the culturally different gifted. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Horowitz, F. D., & O'Brien, M. (Eds.). (1985). *The gifted and talented: Developmental perspectives.* A collection of articles written by psychologists and educators about psychosocial issues. Discusses topics such as the nature of giftedness and the role of society in preparing gifted children for a productive life. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Maker, C. J. (1986). *Critical issues in gifted education: Defensible programs for the gifted.* Presents the views of different authors on each of five broad topics: defining giftedness, developing curricula, enrichment versus acceleration, evaluating programs, and defending programs. Rockville, MD: Aspen.

Maker, C. J., & Schiever, S. W. (Eds.). (1989). *Critical issues in gifted education: Defensible programs for cultural and ethnic minorities.* Presents the views of different authors on each of four groups: Hispanics, American Indians, Asian Americans, and Blacks. Editors provide a synthesis in each section. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Parke, B. N. (1989). *Gifted students in regular classrooms.* Divided into four parts: establishing a framework (characteristics, identification, planning programs); selecting programs; designing curriculum; and maintaining programs. Practical strategies and case studies. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Parker, J. P. (1989). *Instructional strategies for teaching the gifted.* Classroom-tested ideas and activities, curriculum models, detailed strategies, and chapters on the core curriculum subjects. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

VanTassel-Baska, J., Feldhusen, J., Seeley, K., Wheatley, G., Silverman, L., & Foster, W. (Eds.). (1988). *Comprehensive curriculum for gifted learners.* Divided into five sections: introduction, the process of curriculum making, adapting curriculum in the content areas, integrating curriculum from key learning realms, and the process of curriculum doing. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

VanTassel-Baska, J., & Olszewski-Kubilius, P. (Eds). (1989). *Patterns of influence on gifted learners: The home, the self, and the school.* A series of 15 articles that offers a comprehensive look at the interrelated roles played by school, family, and personal characteristics critical to talent development. New York: Teachers College Press.

Whitmore, J. R., & Maker, C. J. (1985). *Intellectual giftedness in disabled persons.* A series of case studies and discussions about gifted individuals with hearing, visual, physical, and learning disabilities. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Practical Self-Help Books, 1979–1989

Adderholdt-Elliott, M. (1987). *Perfectionism: What's bad about being too good?* Explores the differences between healthy ambition and unhealthy perfectionism and gives strategies for getting out of the perfectionist trap. Minneapolis: Free Spirit.

Alvino, J., and the editors of *Gifted Children Monthly* (1985). *Parents' guide to raising a gifted child.* This practical guide to raising and educating gifted children gives tips on promoting intellectual and creative thinking and research skills and on counseling. Lists the best books and games available and assesses the importance of computers. Boston: Little, Brown.

Berger, S. (1989). *College planning for gifted students.* Presents a way to identify gifted students; provides a 6-year plan that guides the gifted student through critical college and career choices based on knowledge of self and educational options. A practical resource for gifted students, counselors, teachers, and parents. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.

Delisle, J. D. (1987). *Gifted children speak out.* Part I is a compilation of gifted childrens' (ages 7–13) answers to questions about their abilities and their concerns. Part II, to be used by teachers and parents, is an extensive discussion/activity guide. Minneapolis: Free Spirit.

Delisle, J., & Galbraith, J. (1987). *The gifted kids' survival guide II* (Ages 11–18). Helps students understand the meaning of giftedness, how to take charge of their own education, how to handle other people's expectations, and how to make and keep friends. Minneapolis: Free Spirit.

Ehrich, V. (1982). *Gifted children: A guide for parents and teachers.* Written in nontechnical language, this book answers commonly asked questions about gifted children. Provides a wide range of information from preschool through career planning for the college student and includes an extensive resource and reference list. New York: Trillium Press.

Galbraith, J. (1984). *The gifted kids' survival guide* (Ages 10 and under). Support and practical suggestions for gifted youngsters who are struggling with typical problems such as schoolwork, peer relationships, and community expectations. Minneapolis: Free Spirit.

Halsted, J. W. (1988). *Guiding gifted readers—From preschool to high school.* Discusses the emotional and intellectual needs of gifted youngsters. Recommends books to meet emotional needs through guided group discussions and intellectual needs through reading guidance. An excellent guide for parents, teachers, counselors, and librarians who work with gifted children. Columbus: Ohio Psychology Publishing.

Kerr, B. (1986). *Smart girls, gifted women.* A thoughtful book that describes why bright girls who show promise in childhood and adolescence often fail to reach their potential. Helps parents and teachers become aware of how to prevent difficulties. Vignettes of eminent women, relevant research, and practical suggestions. Columbus: Ohio Psychology Publishing.

Moore, L. P. (1981). *Does this mean my kid's a genius?* Offers advice to parents ranging from identifying a child with unusual capabilities to beginning education at home. New York: McGraw-Hill.

On being gifted. (1978). Written by students (ages 15–18) who participated in the National Student Symposium on the Education of the Gifted and Talented, this book is an articulate presentation of student concerns such as peer pressure, teacher expectations, and relationships. Recommended for educators, parents, and students. New York: Walker & Company.

Rimm, S. (1986). *The underachievement syndrome: Causes and cures.* A psychologist specializing in underachieving gifted students uses case studies and descriptions of prototypes to discuss symptoms, causes, and cures. Watertown, WI: Apple Publishing.

Smutny, J. F., Veenker, K., & Veenker, S. (1989). *Your gifted child: How to recognize and develop the special talents in your child from birth to age seven.* A practical sourcebook containing a wealth of information for parents and educators of young gifted children. Leads parents through infancy and early childhood, discussing topics such as language development, creativity, and how to choose schools. Provides a developmental checklist. New York: Facts On File.

Vail, P. (1987). *Smart kids with school problems.* A learning disability may account for underachievement in some gifted students. This valuable book emphasizes the traits of gifted students and the learning styles that set gifted/learning disabled students apart. Includes an annotated bibliography and resources. New York: E. P. Dutton.

Webb, J., Meckstroth, B., & Tolan, S. (1982). *Guiding the gifted child: A practical source for parents and teachers.* Ten topics are discussed including discipline, stress management, communication of feelings, and family relationships. The book is an outgrowth of continuing work at Wright State University. Columbus: Ohio Psychology Publishing.

Whitmore, J. R. (1980). *Giftedness, conflict, and underachievement.* A comprehensive work that reviews the literature; describes a long-term research project; and provides suggestions on how counselors, educators, and parents can help. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Books on Specific Areas in Gifted Education

Armstrong, T. (1987). *In their own way: Discovering and encouraging your child's personal learning style.* A former teacher and learning disabilities specialist describes learning differences and provides suggestions. Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher. Distributed by St. Martin's Press.

Berger, S. (Ed.) (1990). *ERIC flyer files on gifted learners.* A collection of reproducible fact sheets about guiding and educating gifted and talented students. These newly developed resources provide the perfect handout for meetings with parents, teachers, and the community. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.

Buescher, T. M. (Ed.). (1987). *Understanding gifted and talented adolescents: A resource guide for counselors, educators, and parents.* For professionals and parents interested in the intellectual, social, and emotional traits and needs of gifted and talented adolescents. Appropriate for people with little reading experience in the field as well as those with expertise. Evanston, IL: The Center for Talent Development, Northwestern University.

Colangelo, N., & Zaffrann, D. (Eds.). (1979). *New voices in counseling the gifted.* A collection of articles containing theoretical and practical information on topics such as the role of the school guidance counselor, creativity, girls' attitudes, culturally diverse gifted, and career development. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Daniel, N. & Cox, J. (1988). *Flexible pacing for able learners.* Flexible pacing is any provision that places students at an appropriate instructional level, creating the best possible match between students' achievement and instruction. This book describes workable options appropriate for all grade levels. Examples illustrate how flexible pacing works in classrooms with real students across the country. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.

Elkind, D. (1981). *The hurried child: Growing up too fast, too soon.* A noted behavioral scientist argues that modern society is robbing children of childhood and examines the issues of stress and expectations in contemporary culture. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Feldman, R. D. (1982). *Whatever happened to the Quiz Kids? Perils and profits of growing up gifted.* The author, one of the original Quiz Kids, provides insights on her own childhood and the lives of other Quiz Kids, drawing conclusions about the challenges of growing up gifted. Chicago: Review Press.

Gardner, H. (1985). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences* (rev. ed.). Gardner has described seven different types of intelligence: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. He suggests that individuals tend to display abilities in one or two specific areas. This book provides theoretical information on the nature of intelligence. New York: Basic Books.

Karnes, M. B. (1983). *The underserved: Our young gifted children.* Offers a comprehensive perspective on identification and programming for gifted children during the preschool years. Provides a rationale for early identification and programming. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.

Kaufmann, F. (1981). *Your gifted child and you* (rev. ed.). A brief and informative book containing a concise and readable introduction to the identification, nurturing, and problems of the gifted youngster. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.

Mitchell, P. B. (1981). *An advocate's guide to building support for gifted and talented students.* A guide to effective advocacy for parents and community leaders. Specific procedures and a systematic approach are among this guide's many strengths. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Boards of Education.

Sternberg, R. (1985). *Beyond IQ: A triarchic theory of human intelligence.* A scholarly volume that outlines an approach to understanding intelligence and argues against the role of traditional IQ tests in education. New York: Cambridge University Press.

VanTassel-Baska, J. (Ed.). (1990). *A practical guide to counseling the gifted in a school setting* (2nd ed.). This useful monograph provides an overview of counseling trends and issues, discusses the characteristics of gifted children and their related counseling needs, and provides practical models. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.

Journals/Periodicals

Advanced Development, a journal on adult giftedness, is the official publication of the Institute for the Study of Advanced Development. Provides articles of interest to professionals and those with some reading experience in the field of gifted education. Published annually by Snowpeak Publishing, Inc., P. O. Box 3489, Littleton, CO 80122.

Gifted Child Quarterly is the official publication of the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), published four times a year. It contains articles of interest to professionals and those with some reading experience in the field of gifted education and counseling. NAGC membership includes the journal. NAGC, 4175 Lovell Road, Box 30, Suite 140, Circle Pines, MN 55014.

Gifted Child Today (formerly G/C/T) is directed at teachers and parents. It avoids jargon and provides practical advice on working with gifted, creative, and talented children. Articles on research and programming, and a lively advice column are included in each issue. Published bimonthly. P. O. Box 637, 100 Pine Avenue, Holmes, PA 19043.

Journal for the Education of the Gifted (JEG) is the official publication of The Association for the Gifted (TAG), and is aimed at experienced readers of the literature. For membership or subscription information, TAG, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091.

Roeper Review is a refereed journal that accepts contributions from teachers, counselors, scholars, researchers, and students. This journal focuses on current research and issues that relate to the lives and experiences of gifted children. For educators, counselors, and parents who have had some experience in reading in the field. Published quarterly. Roeper Review, P. O. Box 329, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013.

Understanding Our Gifted, published bimonthly, addresses the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted youth through regular columns and feature articles. The perspective is on giftedness as advanced development rather than as achievement or potential achievement. Provides practical information on current issues in a clear, interesting writing style. Snowpeak Publishing, P. O. Box 3489, Littleton, CO 80122.

Journals on Creativity

The Creative Child and Adult Quarterly, 8080 Springvalley Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45236.

The Journal of Creative Behavior, 1050 Union Road, Buffalo, NY 14224.

Selected Summer Guides

Advisory List of International Educational Travel and Exchange Programs. Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET), 3 Loudoun Street, SE, Suite 3, Leesburg, VA 22075.

Boarding Schools: Special Programs (Summer). National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), 75 Federal Street, Boston MA 02170.

Directory of Student Science Training Programs for High Ability Precollege Students. Science Service, Inc., 1719 N Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Educational Opportunity Guide. Duke University Talent Identification Program, Box 40077, Durham, NC 27706.

Guide to Accredited Camps. American Camping Association (ACA), Bradford Woods, 5000 State Road 67 North, Martinsville, IN 46151-7902.

Peterson's Summer Opportunities for Kids and Teenagers. Peterson's Guides, Princeton, NJ 08543.

Summer on Campus by Shirley Levin (1989). College Board Publications, Box 886, New York, NY 10101-0886.

Summer Options for Teenagers by Cindy Ware (1990). Simon & Schuster, 15 Columbus Circle, New York, NY 10023.

Teenagers' Guide to Study, Travel, and Adventure Abroad. Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), 205 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017.

Volunteer! by Marjorie Adoff Cohen (1989). Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), 205 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017.

Associations

American Association for Gifted Children
P. O. Box 2745
Dayton, OH 45435

Gifted Child Society, Inc.
190 Rock Road
Glen Rock, NJ 07452

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC)
1155 15th Street, NW, Suite 1002
Washington, DC 20005

The Association for the Gifted (TAG)
The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted, Inc. (SENG)
Wright State University
P. O. Box 1102
Dayton, OH 45401

Publishers and Resources for Materials

Addison-Wesley, One Jacob Way, Reading, MA 01867

Allyn and Bacon, 160 Gould Street, Needham Heights, MA 02194

American Psychological Association, 1200 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036

Apple Publishing Co., W. 6050 Apple Road, Watertown, WI 53094

Aristoplay, P. O. Box 7028, Ann Arbor, MI 48107

Aspen Publishers, 1600 Research Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20850

A. W. Peller & Associates, Educational Materials, 210 Sixth Avenue, P. O. Box 106, Hawthorne, NJ 07507

Basic Books, 10 E. 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022

Blue Marble, 118 North Ft. Thomas Avenue, Ft. Thomas, KY 41075

R. R. Bowker, 11800 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036

Cambridge University Press, 40 W. 20th Street, New York, NY 10011

The Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091

Creative Learning Press, P. O. Box 320, Mansfield Center, CT 96250

Curriculum Associates, 5 Esquire Road, North Billerica, MA 01862-2589

D.O.K. Publishers, P. O. Box 605, East Aurora, NY 14052

E. P. Dutton, 2 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Educators Publishing Service, Inc., 75 Moulton Street, Cambridge, MA 02238-9101

Facts on File, 460 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016

Foxtail Press, P. O. Box 2996, La Habra, CA 90632-2996

Free Spirit Publishing Co., 123 North Third Street, Suite 716, Minneapolis, MN 55401

Gifted & Talented Publications, Inc., P. O. Box 115, Sewell, NJ 08080

Good Apple, P. O. Box 299, Carthage, IL 62321-0299

Kendall/Hunt, 2460 Kerper Boulevard, Dubuque, IA 52001

Little, Brown & Company, 34 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02106

Love Publishing Co., 1777 S. Bellaire Street, Denver, CO 80222

McGraw-Hill, 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020

Merrill Publishing Co., 300 Alum Creek Drive, Columbus, OH 43216

Midwest Publications, P. O. Box 448, Pacific Grove, CA 93950

Montessori Matters and E-Z Learning Materials, 701 East Columbia Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45215

The National Association of State Boards of Education, 701 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

NL Associates, Inc., P. O. Box 1199, Hightstown, NJ 08520

The Ohio Psychology Publishing Company, 400 East Town Street, Suite 020, Columbus, OH 43215

Opportunities for Learning, 2041 Nordhoff Street, Chatsworth, CA 91311

Pied Piper, 2922 North 35th Avenue, Suite 4, Drawer 11408, Phoenix, AZ 85061-1408

Prentice Hall, Sylvan Avenue, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632

Pro-Ed, 8700 Shoal Creek Boulevard, Austin, TX 78758

Provoking Thoughts, Institute for the Development of Educational Alternatives, P. O. Box 1104, Austin, MN 55912

Review Press, 213 W. Institute Place, Chicago, IL 60610

Scholastic Testing Service, Inc., 480 Meyer Road, P. O. Box 1056, Bensenville, IL 60106-8056

St. Martin's Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010

Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 5 Union Square West, New York, NY 10003

Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027

Trillium Press, P. O. Box 209, Monroe, NY 10950

University of Texas Press, P. O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713

Ventura County Superintendent of Schools, Attn: LTI Publications, 535 East Main Street, Ventura, CA 93009

Walker & Company, 720 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019

Zephyr Press, P. O. Box 13448, Tucson, AZ 85732-3448

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OVERVIEW

ERIC® DIGEST NO. 63

Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

REDUCING THE DROPOUT RATE THROUGH CAREER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The social, economic, and political costs of the dropout problem have been well documented. According to Brown (1985), the costs in lost tax revenues and payments to welfare recipients incurred as a result of the dropout problem amount to $20 billion annually. Willis (1986) cites figures stating that, based on estimates that the lifetime earnings loss of a single male dropout is $187,000 and that of a single female dropout is $122,000, the lost lifetime earnings from a high school with a 40 percent dropout rate is $3.2 billion. The shrinking entry-level labor pool (estimated to represent 16 percent of the population in 1995 as opposed to a previous level of 25 percent) is also making it increasingly difficult for business to ignore those members of this pool whom they could previously overlook—poorly motivated youth who lack fundamental literacy skills and are unacquainted with the responsibilities of the world of work (Brown 1985).

Why Do Students Drop Out?

Examining the reasons why students drop out, Willis (1986) discusses the following correlates of educational risk: family structure and poverty, race and ethnicity, language, residence, economic displacement, and gender. Indicators of educational risk, according to Willis, are student attendance, school continuation rates, academic performance, involvement in school activities, student behavior, attitudes toward school, need for employment, nature of family support, involvement in out-of-school activities, and involvement with the juvenile justice system. This does not mean, however, that dropping out is just a minority or urban problem. Noting that since 1970 the dropout rate for blacks has decreased nationally, whereas that for white students has edged up steadily, Brown (1985) prefers to categorize highrisk youth as either alienated ("uninterested in or dissatisfied with the values represented by school and work" and lacking in "motivation to succeed in expected ways" [p. 9]), disadvantaged and alienated, or simply disadvantaged.

What Is Career and Vocational Education's Role in Dropout Prevention?

In view of the risk factors, then, the key to reducing the dropout rate is helping youth to overcome their sense of disconnection. Miller and Imel (1987) attest that students with low motivation to attend school have shown improvement in school attendance and retention after participating in career education and that vocational students who have participated in career education are more likely to complete the vocational program they have selected. An analysis performed by Mertens, Seitz, and Cox (1982) on data obtained in 1979 and 1980 interviews with the New Youth Cohort of the National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Force Behavior confirmed that, all else being equal, the more vocational classes students took, the less likely they were to drop out of school. The relationship between vocational education and the choice to stay in school was, however, only statistically significant in grades 10 and 12 (and negative but not significant for grade 11). Furthermore, the effect was quite small in both grades 10 and 12 (Mertens, Seitz, and Cox 1982). Miller and Imel (1987) offer some reasons for the size of this effect when they discuss the importance of the quality of the vocational education experienced by different students. They point out that casual exploration through vocational courses or work experience that is not related to learning goals is less effective than is major concentration in a vocational program. Thus, they recommend that vocational and career educators desiring to improve student retention develop individualized plans (including educational goals, strategies to reduce barriers to the achievement of goals, and timeliness for monitoring progress on these goals) such as those used with handicapped students. They further recommend small programs with 2-6 teachers serving 25-60 students. They also say that the most successful programs are those in which students are encouraged to be cooperative rather than competitive.

What Kinds of Programs Are Needed?

Having examined the vocational experiences that were most closely related to reductions in individual students' decisions to drop out, Weber (1986) recommends the following: (1) more systematic and intensive efforts to identify and assist potential dropouts prior to and at entry into vocational programs,
(2) program activities to enhance school climate and reduce absenteeism, class-cutting, and drug and alcohol abuse;
(3) systematic awareness and educational activities directed toward enhancing parents' involvement in program planning and support; (4) more extensive career exploration and related career education experiences, particularly prior to and at the transition into high school; (5) improvement of transitions through a vocational program to direct dropout-prone students to job-specific skill training courses; (6) review and evaluation of work study experiences for dropout-prone students to ensure that they involve concrete objectives and program experiences, clear linkages with students' overall school programs, and built-in evaluation activities; (7) review of rules governing vocational program entry to ensure student access to and participation in vocational and work study programs with firm ties to overall school plans and goals; and (8) activities to increase dropout-prone students' participation in the vocational program and enhance linkages between students' vocational experiences and their other school-related experiences and activities (pp. x-xi).

What Are Examples of Successful Programs?

The literature contains many examples of career and vocational programs that have been successful in keeping students from dropping out or helping dropouts reenroll in and complete high school. Such programs may be run by schools exclusively, may be based on a school-business partnership, or may even involve counseling to parents.

Willis (1986) mentions the work done by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) and Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL) confirming the relationship between parent involvement and school achievement. One school-business partnership that encourages parent involvement in career counseling and planning is the Peninsula Academies

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program, which is based at Menlo-Atherton High School and Sequoia High School in California's Silicon Valley. Students are matched with mentors from cooperating companies who volunteer to spend time with students in career-related big brother or big sister roles, to take students to their companies to expose them to the world of work, and to work with parents in helping the students formulate career plans (Justiz and Kameen 1987).

The Peninsula Academies also provide a program of formal classroom instruction to 30 students per year per academy. Students are provided with 3 years of instruction in computers or electronics beginning in the 10th grade. Distinctive features of the program include its highly work-related curriculum, exposure to real jobs through work experience and paid summer employment, and a final incentive of a job waiting for all students who graduate from the program and high school. Area firms contribute lab instructors on loan, funding, equipment, mentors, speakers, field trip sites, and summer jobs (*Peninsula Academies Program* 1984).

Other exemplary career and vocational education programs for high-risk students include the following:

- **Middle College High School** at La Guardia College in New York City exposes high-risk 10th- to 12th-grade students to career options through internships and work placements (Brown 1985).
- **Cities in Schools,** a multisponsored program focusing on youth and their families, which is headquartered in Washington, D.C., presents high-risk youth with a coordinated package linking social and business services to the educational system (ibid.).
- **The Philadelphia High School Academies Program,** which has been operating since 1970, is distinguished by its combination of personal attention and follow-up with actual work experience to provide disadvantaged inner-city high school students with marketable job skills in the electrical occupations, business, auto mechanics, and health care (ibid.).
- **The Cooperative Federation for Education Experiences** (COFFEE) is an exemplary public-private partnership involving the Digital Equipment Corporation and the public schools of Oxford, Massachusetts. Based on a blend of academic study, occupational training, counseling, preemployment experience, and physical education, the program combines academic instruction in a regular high school with training for entry-level positions in high-technology fields (Justiz and Kameen 1987).

Suggestions for ways in which school leaders, business leaders, and policymakers can help dropout-prone youth are presented in *Reconnecting Youth* (Brown 1985).

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ERIC® DIGEST No. 87

EDO-CE-89-87

Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

RETAINING AT-RISK STUDENTS IN CAREER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Statistics indicate that almost 30 percent of students entering high school will leave prior to graduation. Urban dropout rates often range between 40 and 50 percent. Estimates place the nationwide costs of the dropout problem at a minimum of $26,000 for each dropout during his or her working life (Tindall 1988). This practice application **Digest** lists the factors that place students at risk of dropping out, examines the characteristics of successful programs in career and vocational education for secondary at-risk students, and presents recommendations for enhancing teacher and program effectiveness to motivate at-risk youth.

Factors that Place Students at Risk

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's definition of the term "at-risk" is one of the most comprehensive. It lists 14 factors that place students in serious jeopardy of dropping out, including the following: being one or more years behind their grade level in reading or math (in grades K-8) or three or more credits behind their age/grade level in credits earned toward graduation (in grades 9-12); being chronically truant; being a school-age parent; having a history of personal and/or family drug and alcohol abuse; having parents who have low expectations for their child's success or who place little value on education; being a victim of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse; experiencing a family trauma (such as death or divorce); being economically, culturally, or educationally disadvantaged; and coming from a family with a history of dropouts. Additional risk factors include low intelligence test scores, low self-concept and social maturity, feelings of alienation, and certain types of handicaps and limiting conditions (Tindall 1988).

The Role of Career and Vocational Education in Motivation

Weber (1988) compares vocational and nonvocational instruction from the standpoint of nine characteristics of model dropout prevention programs. The model program characteristics considered are as follows: teachers with the authority to design courses and experiences; low teacher-pupil ratio; teachers attuned to students' needs; environment free from absenteeism, theft, and substance abuse; individualization; active role for students; recognition and special awards; emphasis on basic skills remediation; and emphasis on resolving students' personal problems. Weber finds that vocational education programs are more successful than nonvocational programs in regard to the first seven of these. Only in the latter two areas does Weber conclude that vocational education must do a better job.

A career-focused curriculum has been proposed as one effective strategy for making instructional programs relevant to at-risk students and thus motivating them to remain in school. Vocational educators can shift their programs from a subject-to a career-focused curriculum by (1) conscious and planned facilitation of the school-to-work transition and (2) provision of a rich set of experiential and cooperative learning opportunities that socialize students to the workplace (Fennimore 1988).

Characteristics of Successful Programs

Successful programs share a common set of characteristics related to general organization, staffing, and instruction (Tindall 1988). Such programs are generally presented in contexts that differ from a "traditional" school environment and function somewhat autonomously. Classrooms have low teacher-pupil ratios. Teachers tend to have a special commitment to their programs' philosophies and goals; they are able and willing to establish relationships with their students that go beyond the conventional teacher-student relationship. Teachers devote about half their time to students' remediation needs, about one-fourth to their personal needs, and about one-fourth to their work-related needs. Persuasive motivational strategies and individualized teaching and learning are also used.

Two program models that deserve special mention are the school-within-a-school program and the integrated learning environment. A school-within-a-school program functions best when it includes no more than 25-100 students working with 2-6 faculty members. These programs feature face-to-face relationships; extensive individualized and personalized instruction; teachers who are willing to assume an extended role in which they deal with students' home, community, and personal problems when necessary; a formal application procedure and insistence that students entering the program make a commitment to it; heavy emphasis on basic skills; and clear objectives, prompt feedback, and concrete evidence of progress (Tindall 1988).

In the integrated learning environment model, vocational instruction is provided in an environment in which students, educators (teachers, administrators, and counselors), the business community, parents, and the community at large are viewed as partners in an open and interconnected learning community. In order to increase its relevance to students, classroom instruction is coordinated with career education, paid work experience, and community service. Relationships between students and teachers stress shared goal setting and decision making, teamwork, group participation, and supportive leadership. Fennimore (1988) presents detailed guidelines for developing and implementing a program for at-risk students.

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Recommendations for Program Development

Tindall (1988) identifies five key components of successful programs for keeping at-risk students in school: (1) administrative support, (2) community support, (3) family support, (4) funding support, and (5) development of a program geared toward the special needs needs of at-risk students. He recommends the following actions:

- Develop a K-12 approach to retaining at-risk students
- Encourage creativity and ownership of programs, involve staff members in planning and decision making, and create a flexible management style
- Involve community-based organizations, develop business-education partnerships with local employers, and coordinate approaches with other service providers (Private Industry Councils, community service organizations, health and human service organizations, and religious institutions)
- Assist families in dealing with problems related to family relationships, abuse and neglect, substance abuse, and low self-esteem and apathy
- Use a multiple funding approach and apply for funding from federal and state legislative programs pertaining to job training, vocational and adult education, special education, literacy, juvenile justice and delinquency, and so forth, as appropriate

Tindall provides detailed recommendations regarding identifying, recruiting, retaining, and assessing at-risk students; developing and/or improving prevocational programs; and implementing vocational programs geared toward the unique needs of at-risk students.

Recommendations for Structuring Classrooms

Eschenmann (1989) presents a set of practical recommendations for vocational educators to use in structuring their classrooms to meet the needs of at-risk students. His recommendations are grouped into the following five categories.

Teaching Style

Use a student-centered approach. Design classroom activities to build on individual student strengths, interests, needs, and desires while meeting stated program goals. Be a positive role model for students. Demonstrate confidence, competence, respect for students, and trust. Offer encouragement.

Curriculum

Explain the curriculum so that students know what it entails. Be sure that the curriculum challenges all of the students in the class regardless of their ability so that students can feel that they are achieving in meaningful activities. Use a variety of in- and out-of-school activities that are coordinated to meet both the educational goals of the program and the students' needs, interests, and expectations. Vary daily activities to increase student motivation and productivity.

Students' Learning Style

Ascertain how much and what kind of learning has already taken place. State educational objectives clearly so that students can have a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn before they apply their own learning styles to accomplish the objectives set for them.

Classroom Organization and Management

Strive to keep every student involved in activities that are relevant to his or her needs and tied to clearly stated educational objectives. Do not interrupt a student's task once activities have been assigned, and never assign a second activity before the first one has been completed. Organize the classroom so that a variety of activities can be conducted at the same time by students working in small groups.

Evaluation and Assessment

Develop a comprehensive evaluation and assessment system that includes a separate testing plan for each type of student activity. Identify a variety of different test items and techniques to match the range of abilities of the students in the class. Use a variety of testing situations, and test when the situation calls for it rather than at preset intervals. Select evaluation instruments to complement the types of activities that students have used to master the skills being covered.

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ERIC DIGEST

RURAL EDUCATION

RURAL OPTIONS FOR GIFTED EDUCATION

Most rural schools are small and far from the Ivory Towers of Academia. This means that, until recently, researchers have not investigated what is working in Rural America, particularly in the area of gifted education (Anderson & Kleinsassar, 1986). Much of what is known about gifted children (defined here as academically gifted) is based upon data gathered or experiences reported in urban settings. Because of this urban flavor, rural settings are often thought of as intellectual and cultural wastelands which are potentially harmful to the gifted child (Witters & Vasa, 1981.) What we must realize, however, is that each setting offers unique opportunities for the learning of its gifted children.

What is Unique About Rural Gifted Education?

Rural schools should not try to replicate urban programs, nor should academics try to impose urban models on rural schools (Bullerdieck, 1985). Those who live in rural areas must develop their own programs based on the strengths of their school and community (Nachtigal, 1980; Barker & Muse, 1984). The following list suggests some of the unique features of rural schools as they relate to gifted students:

- Small class size. This allows teachers to spend more time with students, thus individualizing the curriculum to meet the needs of the gifted child.
- A role for every student. Small schools need everyone for academics, art, sports, etc. No one, including the gifted child, can be an isolate and withdraw.
- More potential for multiple age grouping. This allows gifted students to move ahead academically without being uprooted from their chronological age peer group.
- Greater opportunity for teacher mentoring. In small schools, the student load is lower and a greater percentage of students can be mentored.
- Great potential for community involvement with gifted children because all of them are known to the community and to other children.
- More potential for flexibility of course offerings at the Junior/Senior High level. In small schools there are fewer proprietary interests in filling certain high level courses; therefore, more opportunity exists for individualization using non-traditional methods.

What are the General Techniques Which Should Be Used in Gifted Programs?

Many techniques are specific to program types and configurations. The ones listed here are generic to almost all programs for the gifted:

- Provide access to intellectual peers for interaction, sharing, self-comparison and some limited competition.
- Provide challenging activities in the areas where the student exhibits interest.
- Provide a psychologically secure environment where the student can take risks and gain independence.
- Provide appropriate, differentiated education. Remember that students are gifted all of the time, not just part of the day or week. Students who are pulled out of a regular class to go to gifted class should not make up work missed; their regular classwork should be individualized, too!
- Provide an opportunity to receive feedback (grades) on performance that does not jeopardize the student's chances for a scholarship. Use a 6 point rather than a 4 point system for gifted students (where A = 6, B = 5, etc., so that gifted children who receive a "C" in gifted class get a "4", which equals a regular "A" on their transcripts).
- Provide cooperative learning opportunities, e.g., team creativity or problem solving, so that gifted children do not become isolated from their peers.
- Let them make mistakes without fear of punishment if you wish to foster risk taking and independent learning.
- Help the students learn to self-evaluate.
- Give them choices.
- Allow students to have their own ideas, beliefs, and values.
- Allow students to contract for independent activities.

What kinds of grouping provisions work well for rural gifted students?

The typical cascade model of service for gifted children (Bull & Otey, 1984), which assumes that the regular classroom is the most restrictive environment, is inappropriate in most rural settings. This model, which starts with a regular classroom and moves step by step to resource room, to special classroom, to a school for the gifted, and to off-campus (usually college) placement, requires a level of service that can only be functional in very populated and well-to-do districts. Many levels of such "traditional" gifted education are unavailable in small rural settings.

If a sufficient number of students is available to warrant a special program. Students should be pulled out of the regular classroom only when they will benefit from the educational activity that cannot be provided within the regular classroom environment—not just because they are labeled gifted. Students may also be cluster grouped, i.e., they may have their schedules arranged so that they are assigned to the same teacher or have the same free or study period so that they can occassionally interact in a small group.

In schools with smaller enrollments cross-age tutoring may be used to provide for gifted students; older students share their strengths with other younger or less knowledgeable students. With even smaller enrollments, the multi-age, multi-grade classroom, with a good, flexible teacher (the one room schoolhouse) can provide many opportunities for going deeper into the material or going through the curriculum at a more rapid pace.

What kinds of curricular provisions are suggested for use in rural schools with gifted students?

Three kinds of curricular modifications are typically suggested by gifted educators. They may be used individually or in combination and consist of changes in rate of process, changes in control of content, and changes in content to something not normally offered.

Changes in rate of process include:

- Flexible scheduling: Students attends regular class less often than their peers. This allows additional time for other activities.
- Telescoping (compacting) the curriculum: Only the must-know information is taught.
- Acceleration: Grade skipping or moving rapidly ahead in a single academic content area.
- Out-of-level texts: Advanced material is provided and students move at their own best rate of speed.
- Independent learning units: Contain objectives, activities, reading material, etc., which allow students to progress through courses at their own pace.

Changes in control of content include:

- Independent study: Unless independent study is a class itself, it should be used instead of, rather than in addition to, the regular course content (Rowe, 1981). .

Changes in content to something not normally offered include:

- Advanced placement courses: Courses with curricula developed to meet college standards, offered under the auspices of the College Entrance Examining Board.
- Correspondence courses: For junior and senior high students who can study independently. Offered by many universities, some state departments of education (MA, ND), and by The Home Study Institute. A review of correspondence courses offered for gifted is found in Miller (1981).
- OM (formerly Olympics of the Mind): A creativity competition for students K-12. Problems are provided in several areas, e.g., engineering, art, drama, literature. (OM Association, P.O. Box 27, Glassboro, NJ, 08028.)
- Future problem solving: Competitive four-member group working on solutions to creative, future oriented problems. (Ann Crabbe, St. Andrews College, Laurinsburg, NC.)
- College Bowl (Knowledge Bowl): Group competition modeled on the "Sixty-Four Thousand Dollar Question" quiz show or Trivial Pursuit (Williams, 1986).
- Great Books and Junior Great Books: Student or a small group works with an adult discussion leader using a prepared question guide and discusses great literature. (Great Books Foundation, 1974, Junior Great Books, 40 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611).

How Can Technology Provide Access to Resources Not Usually Available in Rural Settings?

Before technology can be adopted in a rural school, two events need to take place: (1) regular teachers in the school must understand that the technology will be used to supplement what they do rather than to supplant them; and (2) the community must accept the idea of technology-based education. Information and experience with new technology should be provided to community members in as concrete and experiential a way as possible. Without exposure, there may be resistance to "new fangled" ideas and technology.

Technology can be used in two ways: to access people or content. Ways to access people include:

- The telephone system to access mentors in an independent study hotline, contact experts through the Wide Area Telephone System (WATS), bring students in different communities together for interaction with conference calls, and interconnect students in remote/isolated areas by statewide audio teleconferences, as in Montana.
- Two-way radio to provide contact between teacher and students has been used in Australia.
- Interactive instructional television.
- Electronic mail systems using a microcomputer and modem.
- Audio or video cassette exchange to facilitate communication between student and student, teacher, or mentor.

Content may be accessed technologically by:

- Videotext, which broadcasts information to television sets and accesses databases for research, via microcomputers.
- Videodiscs which enable students to interact with a videorecording of text or pictures.
- Microcomputers which teach content with software housed on floppy discs or downloaded from a mainframe.
- Instructional television through which many colleges provide courses using either line-of-sight or satellite technology or videotape. Enrichment activities, e.g., plays, concerts, an so forth, are available off the air or for purchase from PBS and other producers (Rosburg, 1981).
- Public radio networks (state or NPR) which sponsor programs in conjunction with a teacher or mentor.
- Audio or video cassettes which can be purchased or rented through media vendors.

What Role Can Transportation Play in Rural Gifted Education?

Some procedures involving transportation include:

- Cultural enrichment: Students can be transported to cultural events in the surrounding area (e.g., theatre, concerts)
- Multidistrict mobile program: Each semester the mobile van/truck/trailer goes to a different district and provides, for example, gifted science (Barker & Muse, 1984).
- Traveling teacher: A mobile teacher comes periodically to the district to provide gifted education or to supplement what the regular teacher provides in terms of appropriate differentiated education.
- Busing: Students are bused, either periodically or daily, to a central location where gifted education is provided.
- Exchange programs: Rural gifted students trade places with urban students, a method used to expose the student to a culture not available in a rural setting.
- Foreign student exchange programs: American Field Service places select high school students with families in other countries for a summer or a year.

What are Some Out-of School Activities for Gifted Students?

- Internships, externships and apprenticeships: Students can volunteer to work with individuals or groups in the community to gain experience in or appreciation of a type of employment or to gain specific skills.
- Mentor programs: The student is matched with an expert (by vocation or avocation) who will facilitate and guide the student's development in an area of interest. There are as many experts in rural areas as there are in urban areas. They may, however, be expert in different things.
- Weekend or Saturday programs: Usually provided by colleges (e.g., J. Feldhusen, Purdue University) or intermediate service units (BOCES) (Porter, 1978). Inquire at colleges and universities in your area.
- Convocations: These multidistrict conventions explore controversial issues, e.g., nuclear power. While students try to understand and develop solutions or position statements on the problems (Strobert & Alvarez, 1982).
- Summer school programs: Usually offered by colleges or consortia of schools to provide enrichment or education in areas not conventionally offered by the schools. A comprehensive list of summer programs is published annually by G/C/T (G/C/T, P.O. Box 66654, Mobile, AL 36660 and by NAGC, 4175 Lovell Rd., Box 30, Suite 140, Circle Pines, MN, 55014).

Most extracurricular activities should be interest based. No students should be arbitrarily assigned to one, nor should they be given grades (Porter, 1983).

Summary

Rural gifted programs should be developed by the consumers in rural communities and should focus on the needs and strengths of the community. The unique aspects of rural schools should be utilized to develop defensible community-based programs. General gifted education procedures, such as developing peer groups and psychologically secure environments, should be followed, but grouping provisions from larger urban settings are not generally appropriate. Curricula for gifted students should be modified in terms of rate of progress, control of content, and type of content. These content changes as well as changes in instructional formats, may be accomplished or supported using modern technological means, particularly computers. When the local program requires it, teachers or students may be transported to off-campus locations to meet program goals. Support activities may be provided out of school, but these activities should be in addition to a regular education program for gifted students.

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ERIC DIGEST

RURAL EDUCATION

RURAL STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: ELEMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION

There is a belief held by many—educators, state board of education members, legislators, the general public—that students from smaller and rural schools receive an inferior education compared to students from larger urban or suburban schools. Until recently, there has been little empirical evidence to challenge that view. Now, however, a growing body of work has begun to examine how well students perform in and after graduation from rural schools. Although the results are far from conclusive, they do suggest that some generally held beliefs about rural student achievement need review, if not revision.

Are There Rural-Urban Differences in Student Achievement?

A comparison of the performance on standarized achievement tests of students from small, usually rural schools with those from larger, often urban institutions has not produced definitive results. Several studies have not found any significant differences between those two groups. In research completed in the state of New York, Monk and Haller (1986) found that students from smaller (often rural) schools achieved as well as students from larger schools. Nor in Alaska did Kleinfeld and others (1985) find that high school size determined the quality of a student's education, experience, or achievement on standardized tests. Moreover, in one New Mexico study, which looked at factors affecting performance of selected high school students, those attending schools in rural areas performed as well as those in urban locales (Ward and Murray, 1985).

Other scholars have found, however, that rural-urban differences do exist. One study in Kansas found that the ACT scores for rural students were two points lower than urban students in each of the categories on the ACT (Downey, 1980). Another examination of student performance in Hawaii public schools found sub-standard achievement to be a pattern in rural areas (McCleery, 1979). Other research on achievement in social studies for 13 year olds pointed out that rural students, comparatively speaking, did well on objective tests focusing on skills but not well on objective tests that focused on factual learning (Easton and Ellerbruch, 1985).

Are Rural-Urban Differences Being Appropriately Measured?

The fact that observers, utilizing statistically based instruments, come to quite different conclusions, suggests that rural-urban might be an inappropriate dichotomy. Students in large, urban school settings are, it is generally recognized, a diverse mix. It is not, however, usually recognized that rural students also are far from uniform and include the children of Black sharecroppers, Appalachian mountaineers, Hispanic migrants, reservation American Indians, Kansas wheat farmers, relocated urbanities, and many others. Therefore, unless the origins and life conditions of all students are held constant, no findings of rural-urban difference are meaningful.

There is some indication that what is being measured in rural-urban difference studies is socioeconomic status and/or ethnicity. Easton and Ellerbruch (1985) found that the poorer rural students fared considerably lower on citizenship and social studies tests than did students from upper socioeconomic urban communities. Another study which held socioeconomic level and ethnicity constant revealed no urban-rural achievement gap (Edington and Martellaro, 1984).

To flesh out rural-urban achievement issues, it is important to consider each group individually, on its own terms, lest a focus on the larger picture obscure complete understanding. For example, Kleinfeld and others (1982) discovered achievement differences between Native Americans in rural village schools and those attending urban boarding schools. Those students who were able to remain with their own tribes and families had a higher success rate than did those operating within the confines of the alien urban milieu.

It is not surprising that students who have less access to diverse reading matter (either through a lack of availability or restricted purchasing power) would not fare as well on standardized tests. But the issue is even more complex, for it appears to be readily assumed that small and large schools have the same curricula. Yet, Barker's 1985 study of high schools has revealed that this is far from the case. The smaller high schools had significantly fewer art, data processing, calculus, psychology, sociology, and advanced placement offerings. Thus, if rural-urban differences were to be found (after backgrounds have been held constant), those might logically be assumed to result not from any factors of desire or ability, but rather from those centered on availability of information. A case in point is Alaska, where after incredible sums of oil money were pumped equilaterally into the schools to make even the smallest technologically modern, students from small and large schools revealed no achievement disparity (Kleinfeld and Others, 1985).

What Effects Do Parents and Community Have on the Attainment of Rural Students?

When communities are involved in the educational process, that seems to have a positive effect on the achievement of youngsters. This has, however, been difficult to demonstrate empirically (Downey, 1980; Kleinfeld and Others, 1985). One of the negative aspects found in most accounts is that rural communities possess a much more limited view of existing occupational roles for rural youth, who then understandably restrict themselves when going on the job market and on to higher education (Downey, 1980). Brown (1985) attributes this to low family expectations of rural students' career options. Such conclusions are, for the most part, supposition and fail to explain why opportunities presented on television fail to inform and intrigue. Kleinfeld and others (1985) have come to a contrary conclusion, proposing that schools which achieve the best results do exhibit a strong teacher/administration/community partnership and school-community agreement on educational programs. They also have reported that there is a direct relationship between quality education programs and the ability of the staff to work toward an educational partnership with the communty. Smaller communities do tend to generate more community support for the school, with it becoming a center for community activity. This, in turn, theoretically provides the students with a greater feeling of belonging to something in which they can participate and thus possess a better self-concept.

How Well Do Rural Students Succeed in Higher Education?

If rural-urban achievement differences are, as some have maintained, significant, then we can reasonably expect that differences would exist in college performance as well, with the rural students being less likely to attend college and to succeed academically and socially. Such assumptions have been quite widespread in educational circles. The rural deficit model, however, does not hold up under analysis. Considerable research indicates that rural students attend college, perform as well there as urban students, and may be as likely to stay in school. As one example, Horn and others (1986), in a study performed in seven North Central States, reported that in 1985 fully 59% of all the 1981, 1983, and 1985 high school graduates were engaged in some kind of educational pursuit, and 44% were enrolled in a four year college. They also found that lack of social skills is not a factor perceived by rural students as important during their transition from high school to college. Moreover, their collegiate grades are comparable to those of urban students. Both Frese and others (1979) and Downey (1980) found little, if any, difference in academic performance. Downey further stated that rural youth come from an environment which requires active and continuous social involvement and they can therefore fit in quite well in the university community. He also found that where the persistence rate for students of variously sized high schools was compared, size had little effect. One researcher concluded that students from rural areas tend to be a greater dropout risk, but he did not attribute this finding to low grades or social skills. Instead, he focused on family expectations and socioeconomic status as parameters (Brown, 1985). Even if Brown's statistics are borne out by other observers, the dropout rates must be calculated in a more sophisticated fashion, with breakdowns by student origins and culture. For example, we need to know whether rural Southern Blacks enter and achieve as well in college as their urban counterparts, or whether rural Hispanics, as another example, have lower educational expectations than urban Hispanics. Assuming rural students *are* more likely to drop out of college, the scholar must then look more concretely at the life experiences of these dropouts, rather than make easy assumptions. Is, for example, a student dropping out because he or she cannot make it at college or because family responsibilities require leaving? Such issues must be addressed so that educators can move beyond a simple pat belief in the rural deficit model.

Summary

The issues surrounding efforts to assess the achievement of rural students (or urban students, for that matter) on standardized tests are by no means simple. The old rural deficit model must, however, be discarded as educators take a new, more objective look at the performance of the many different types of rural students. It is time to dispose of monolithic assumptions about rural America. To really assess the small, rural school's impact on students, comparisons must be made on students who are matched by origin, background, and access to information before any meaningful conclusions about rural achievement can be rendered. Recent composite results prove quite suggestive, however, since many observers have found little difference in the academic achievement of rural and urban students, or in their desire to attend college. A rural deficit model could quite easily be replaced by a rural strength model, for that is suggested by the fact that rural students do wish to attend college and make adequate grades there, notwithstanding the fact that—if Barker's curriculum comparisons hold up for the nation at large—rural high school students have less total access to educational information. It could be argued that they are therefore, in terms of their overall progress, achieving more, not less. Scholars of the future may well find this, indeed, to be true.

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SCHOOL-COLLEGE ALLIANCES: BENEFITS FOR LOW-INCOME MINORITIES

Introduction

The transition from high school to college is difficult for all students, but college enrollment may be simply beyond the grasp of some disadvantaged minority students. To help such students take advantage of the opportunities available to middle-class students, high schools and colleges have begun to collaborate. The collaborating institutions also benefit: public schools receive resources and support they could not otherwise afford, and colleges can be assured of a larger and more fully prepared freshman class.

Although school-college articulation efforts, such as advanced placement and dual enrollment programs, are not new, there has been a proliferation of school-college collaboratives since 1980. Morever, in contrast to the earlier efforts, which served relatively few minorities, current collaboratives often have minorities as their focus.

Why Schools and Colleges Collaborate

In general, schools and colleges recognize that they are dealing with related parts of a common problem: helping disadvantaged students get the education they need to join an increasingly sophisticated labor force. While neither their specific goals nor their methods of functioning are likely to be in complete accord, both partners believe that collaboration can help them solve problems of mutual concern.

Student Development. A primary reason for collaboration is to improve the college preparatory education of disadvantaged students through curriculum enhancement and remedial programs; and to provide students with counseling and other supports to promote high school completion, college enrollment and continued attendance until college graduation.

School Improvement. The infusion of college resources: (1) helps high schools develop new curricula to meet a reform agenda; (2) improves their facility, by providing laboratories and other equipment (or at least makes such resources available to students through campus access agreements); (3) helps develop programs for at-risk students (i.e., dropout prevention) that schools aren't able to implement independently; and (4) increases articulation between K-12 and post-secondary education. In addition, schools acquire prestige from collaborating with colleges, and this can help stem urban white middle class flight. Equally important, college ties can facilitate teacher recruitment and development (Gross, 1988). Finally, a number of school-college alliances offer schools the opportunity to participate in the research projects of schools of education. These collaboratives ensure that teaching is research-driven and that research is relevant to teachers' needs.

College Improvement. By helping to prepare students for college before they enroll, colleges can help ensure larger, more ethnically and racially diverse incoming classes, who are academically ready for college work. Thus, recruitment is easier, and the need for remedial courses diminished. Colleges also receive public relations benefits from collaborating: political and community leaders frequently urge colleges to focus more directly on the needs of urban students. Moreover, a common incentive is the increasing number of grants which stipulate school-college collaboration (Trubowitz, 1984).

Schools of education in particular can benefit from collaboratives. Public schools are a ready source of enrichment for teacher education curriculum, and of classes for student teachers and individual students for tutoring projects; and they are the best place to test research. Public schools can also offer schools of education more direct contributions, such as collaboration on the development of projects.

Types of Collaborative Activities

The number of activities already created by school-college collaboratives is enormous, and is steadily growing. Although early intervention may be more beneficial for students, most collaborative activities are for junior and senior high school students. In general, these activities fall into two categories: those that directly target students, and those that indirectly improve students' educational experiences. These are some of the most common collaborative activities:

College-Level Study in High School, often situated on college campuses, for the disadvantaged gifted.
Academic Counseling on precollege courses.
Tutoring, Mentoring, and Skills Building, provided by college faculty, staff, or students.
Campus Tours and Contact with College Students.
Summer Remedial or College Programs, on campus.
Parent Involvement Programs to encourage support for students' college aspirations at home.
Teacher Development to prepare teachers to teach new subjects or to improve their abilities in those previously studied, to raise their morale, and to heighten their expectations for disadvantaged students.
Curriculum Improvement, through creation of a community of practice-sensitive researchers and research-sensitive teachers.

The Process of Collaboration

In the past, a hierarchal structure, with colleges holding the power and resources, was assumed to be one of the sources of friction in a collaborative and a cause of its eventual demise. Thus, current collaboratives strive for collegiality and equality in relationships between public school and college participants, although the ideal is usually beyond reach.

Leadership. Top leadership in both institutions should be involved to give legitimacy to the collaborative and to ensure the availability of human and financial resources (Mocker, Martin, & Brown, 1988).

Hands-On Participants. Participants should include individuals (i.e., principals, deans, teachers, professors, counselors) who have the most to gain from collaboration, and who represent a broad range of departments from both sides. Representatives from the school side are likely to be more eager to participate, since the reward system for college faculty still stresses teaching and publishing, and working with a collaborative can detract from those activities. Still, benefits can accrue to college participants, and they should be clearly indicated at the outset.

Funding. Broad-based and long-term funding is crucial to the stability of a collaborative, although it is difficult to secure. While foundations are currently supporting collaboratives in the short-run, as a means of improving the general health of urban areas, funders may steer collaboratives in a direction different from the one desired by their members. Further, the fact that colleges usually receive and administer the grants skews the power balance of the collaborative, despite efforts at equality.

Stages. Collaboratives move through various stages of development (Trubowitz, 1984; Gifford & Gabelko, 1987). For example, replacing feelings of distrust - one of the stages - with collegiality requires sharing experiences and roles. Other stages must be worked through similarly until mutuality and trust are achieved.

Networks of Collaboratives

Collaborative networks can share lessons, give mutual support, and develop models. There are currently several effective ones in operation, including The College Board's Educational EQuality Project Models Program, the Council of Chief State School Officers School/College Collaboration Project, the National Association of State University and Land-Grant College's University/Urban School Collaborative Program, and John Goodlad's National Network for Urban Renewal.

Conclusion

Despite the proliferation of collaboratives in the last decade, there are unsolved problems about the operation of collaboratives. Prime among them is control: the tendency is for colleges to dominate despite claims of equality. Also, questions remain about whether the resources needed for effective collaboration might be more effectively applied to other activities; while there has been much public and foundation enthusiasm for the growing prevalence of collaboratives, it is still questionable whether the large amounts of time and effort required to initiative and perpetuate them could be spent more productively on other methods of educational improvement for poor and minority students.

Further, notwithstanding the domination of colleges, the general perception is that school personnel benefit most from the collaboration—indeed, even more than the disadvantaged students who were the intended principal beneficiaries of collaborative projects (Mickelson, Kritek, Hedlund, & Kaufmann, 1988).

There are also some areas of concern to disadvantaged students, such as the financing of their college education, that thus far have remained largely untouched by collaboratives. These problems must be addressed if all students are to have equal access to a college education.

—Carol Ascher & Wendy Schwartz

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The comprehensive monograph on which this Digest is based, *School-College Collaborations: A Strategy for Helping Low-Income Minorities*, by Carol Ascher, is available for $8 from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. In addition to providing an expanded discussion of the issues capsulized here, it includes descriptions of many collaboratives operating around the country and a 50-item reference list.

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ERIC DIGEST

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The Scope of Practice of the Secondary School Counselor

Susan Jones Sears and Doris Rhea Coy

Introduction

Statistics from the 1988 Census data (U.S. Government, 1988) demonstrate how difficult it is to be a "kid" in America today. In just one day, an average of:

- 2,795 teenagers become pregnant
- 1,106 of those teens later have abortions
- 372 miscarry
- 1,027 babies are born drug- or alcohol-exposed in utero
- 211 children are arrested for drug abuse
- 437 are arrested for drinking and drunken driving
- 10 die from gunshot wounds
- 30 are wounded by gunfire
- 1,512 teens drop out of school
- 1,849 are abused or neglected
- 6 commit suicide
- 3,288 run away from home.

Obviously, more and more children and youth are coming to school with serious personal problems. In schools, the individuals trained to help students deal with their personal problems are school counselors. The role or scope of practice of the secondary school counselor in today's school is the focus of this digest.

Role of the Secondary School Counselor

Several influences have impacted what has been referred to as "the role" of secondary school counselors. Among the influences are state certification standards; counselor education training programs; the nature of school systems; professional organizations; principals and other administrators' beliefs about counselors; and the counselors themselves. Principals have had a major influence on counselors' roles. In many situations, principals have dictated "the role" by assigning the counselor "duties"—often administrative or quasi-administrative duties (e.g., counting credits, keeping track of attendance, discipline) that have little to do with the actual role of school counselors or the needs of students. School counselors appear to be reluctant or unable to convince principals that they should perform the duties for which they have been trained. This must change if school counselors are to have any influence in the restructured schools of the future.

In this complex and troubled society, school counselors are being asked to assume a greater role in the lives of their students and the students' families. The challenges facing counselors and demands on their time will continue to grow during the next decade. School counselors must choose carefully where they spend their time and energy. But, given the challenges faced by today's students, school counselors must focus on students' personal/social, educational, and career needs. In order to do so, counselors need to move from a services-oriented approach (orientation, information, assessment, counseling, placement, and follow-up) to a school counseling program approach. They must be clear about their "scope of practice"—the responsibilities for which they are trained—and not allow themselves to become assistant principals, attendance officers, substitute teachers, and clerks.

A Program Approach to School Counseling

School counselors can exert more control over their scope of practice if they commit themselves to designing and implementing developmental school counseling programs (Gysbers, 1990). While crisis and remedial counseling will always be a part of the school counselor's responsibilities, counselors must provide assistance to as many students as possible. Emphasizing developmental counseling programs permits counselors to be seen as contributing to the growth of all students and not just working with those "in trouble." Developmental counseling programs focus on meeting students' needs and lead to activities and structured group experiences for all students (Gysbers, 1990). They are proactive rather than reactive and when counselors are busy implementing their program, they are unavailable for unrelated administrative and clerical duties (Gysbers, 1990).

Developmental Counseling Programs include both "content" and "process" components. The **content** component of the program speaks to:

1. The rationale for the program (why the school and children need a counseling program);
2. The personal-social, educational, and career development skills or competencies needed by children and youth; and
3. The management plan or blueprint intended to guide counselors' management of the counseling program.

The **process** component includes:

1. The activities counselors will use to help students achieve the designated skills or competencies;
2. The counseling strategies they intend to employ, e.g., individual counseling, group counseling, classroom guidance, and/or consultation; and
3. Methods to be used to evaluate their program and improve their effectiveness with students, staff, and parents (Sears, 1990).

The Scope of Practice of the School Counselor in Developmental Counseling Programs

In a comprehensive developmental school counseling program, the counselor has the following scope of practice (the responsibilities for which a school counselor is trained and qualified):

Design. Counselors design the content of the program. Gysbers, (1990) refers to this content as a "guidance curriculum." The content of the program is designed to help students gain skills or competencies in personal-social, educational, and career domains.

Following is a list of skills/competencies that one might expect to see in the content of a developmental counseling program.

1. *Personal-Social Skills*. Students will: (a) gain self-awareness and improve self-esteem; (b) make healthy choices and effective decisions; (c) assume responsibility for their own behavior; (d) respect individual differences and cooperate; and (e) learn to resolve conflicts.
2. *Educational Skills*. Students will: (a) acquire study and test-taking skills; (b) seek and use educational information; (c) set educational goals; and (d) make appropriate educational choices.
3. *Career Development Skills*. Students will: (a) analyze interests, aptitudes, and skills; (b) recognize effects of career stereotyping; (c) form a career identity; and (d) plan for their future careers (Sears, 1990).

Delivery. Counselors must be involved in the delivery of this developmental program content or curriculum that they have developed. They must allocate significant amounts of time to facilitate or team teach developmental learning activities in the classrooms. Also, they will need to set up inservices for teachers to enable them to assist in the facilitation of the activities. Counselors need to deliver their program content in small and large group sessions. Large group sessions may be appropriate for the information about and discussion of post-secondary or vocational education options and financial aid. Small groups may be more appropriate for interests or aptitude test interpretations.

Counsel. Counselors must counsel students both individually and in small groups. Counselors must not forget their unique counseling skills. While schools are not appropriate cites for "caseloads of clients," counselors must always allot time for counseling students with personal-social problems, both individually and in small groups. In order to be as effective as possible in a limited number of sessions, counselors should utilize newer theoretical approaches such as brief therapy.

Consult. Counselors must consult with parents, teachers, other educators, and various community agencies to help students deal with more serious personal and educational problems, both individually and in small groups. In order to be as effective as possible, in a limited number of sessions, counselors should utilize newer theoretical approaches such as brief therapy.

Coordinate. Counselors must coordinate or collaborate with others who may be offering mental health-oriented programs, e.g., substance abuse. Counselors report that more and more community-based programs are operating in the schools. The school counselors should either coordinate the efforts of these programs or collaborate in their delivery.

Testing programs are often coordinated by school counselors. In these days of accountability, counselors must be careful not to permit this responsibility to consume too much of their time. While counselors should understand thoroughly all relevant interest, aptitude, and achievement tests and should be able to offer inservices to teachers on their interpretation and use, they should not be spending their time in direct administration of tests.

Manage. Counselors must manage the school counseling program. Directors of guidance are a dying breed. Many counselors find themselves supervised by individuals who have more responsibilities than they can handle. Counselors must take charge of their own programs and encourage interaction and regular meetings of the counselors in their district in order to assure program progress.

Managing a school counseling program includes developing an active staff/community public relations program. Counselors should orient staff and community to the counseling program through newsletters, local media, and school and community presentations.

Managing also involves pulling together advisory committees of parents and community members to gather input related to student needs. The management function is critical to the success of a school counseling program.

Evaluate. Counselors need to evaluate their efforts with students, staff, and community. Counselors can gather evaluation data from several sources. One source of information is "general evaluation" data which includes number of students seen in individual or crisis counseling, number of small group counseling sessions, number of large group information sessions, number of conferences with parents, and number of phone calls to parents and community agencies. While this kind of general evaluation does not speak to the quality of counselor contacts, it does provide the school board and administration information about the scope or breadth of the counseling program. "Specific evaluation" data takes more counselor planning time. Counselors need to plan to evaluate their work with students (particularly the delivery of the guidance activities in classrooms). Ratings scales to be completed by teachers and/or students and short surveys to determine what students gained from the guidance activities are two additional methods that can be used to evaluate the counseling program. Program evaluation is one of the weakest areas in school counseling. Many counselors will need to seek assistance from nearby counselor educators in setting up their evaluation process.

Continued Professional Development

The need to update professional skills is critical if counselors are to implement the scope of practice described in this paper. Certainly school counselors being trained today have the advantage of graduating from more rigorous counselor education programs than those of the past. However, counselors, particularly those who were trained over a decade ago, must participate in inservice training (designed for counselors not teachers), attend professional meetings, and read professional journals if they intend to meet student needs in this complex society.

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ERIC Digest

SCREENING FOR SCHOOL ENTRY

Tynette Wilson Hills

Screening programs for children entering school are used to predict which pupils are likely to have problems in regular classrooms and to identify those who may be eligible for particular programs, such as special education. Screening practices vary greatly from state to state, according to a national survey (Gracey and others, 1984), and their use is increasing. This digest discusses issues related to screening and screening procedures.

The Purpose of Screening

The terms "screening" and "assessment" are not interchangeable. Screening is a preliminary process for identifying children who may be at risk of future difficulty in school (e.g., inability to meet academic expectations) and those who may have special needs in learning (e.g., extraordinary abilities and talents or handicapping conditions). In both cases, the identified children must be assessed more carefully to evaluate whether they do indeed require adaptations of the regular instructional program, or qualify for specialized educational placement. Because screening is intended for all the children, the measures should be inexpensive, brief, simple to administer, and easy to interpret. Screening tools require lower predictive power than diagnostic measures. Thus, screening alone is not sufficient for decisions about a child's placement or kind of instruction. Further assessment is necessary. (Meisels and others, 1984).

Eligibility for School Entry

Many schools now screen age-eligible children to determine school readiness, even though educators disagree about what determines a child's chances of success in school. One reason for this trend is that escalating standards in the early grades have altered curriculum, causing more entering children to be at risk of failure.

School entry is usually based upon birth date. When chronological age is the criterion, the 12-month age range, and individual differences in development and experience almost always result in a heterogeneous group. Schools have tried several measures to cope with that variation (Uphoff and Gilmore, 1985), including delayed entry for the youngest children, slower-paced classes for immature children, and transitional classes for some children. Screening is often used to find those children who, after further assessment, seem to be good candidates for one of these options.

Keeping children in the regular program may be more beneficial in the long run and can further equal educational opportunity (Laosa, 1977; May and Welch, 1986). Controlled studies of children held back and those in regular programs do not show significant advantages for holding back (Shepard and Smith, 1985). Screening and assessment can be used to identify children who may need more individual help or smaller classes to remain with their peers.

Issues in Screening

The underlying question about screening at school entry is whether young children's behavior should be measured. Is screening harmful? Is it valid? Goodwin and Driscoll (1980) claim that charges of harm are not substantiated. Instead, the issues are what, how, when, and why.

What should screening measure or observe? Two basic kinds of tests are associated with screening and assessment of children entering school: school readiness tests and developmental screening tests (Meisels, 1986). Readiness tests yield information about the extent to which a child has acquired the knowledge and skills considered to be important entry criteria for a particular program. Developmental screening tests provide information about a child's performance in broad areas of normal development and potential to acquire further knowledge and skills. Both kinds of information are important, but one kind of measure cannot be substituted for the other.

How should children's abilities be measured? Tapping broad developmental areas—language, intellectual and perceptual functioning, and motor coordination—will help to assure validity. Screening should also include the social-emotional domain, since children with early behavioral problems often have problems later in school (Gracey and others, 1984).

Screening procedures should sample what children know and can do in situations in which they are comfortable. Young children's behavior is affected by unfamiliar situations. If children have difficulty responding (e.g., using pencils to write or mark on forms), they may not be able to demonstrate their actual abilities.

Information from multiple sources—parents, teachers, and others, using informal tools to augment any tests and checklists—will present a more adequate picture of a child's current functioning.

Educators who select screening instruments should insist upon accepted standards (Meisels and others, 1984):

- Were norm-referenced measures developed on a population including children like the ones to be screened?
- Are the measures valid and reliable?
- Are they sensitive, correctly identifying children possibly at risk?
- Are they specific, correctly excluding others from further assessment?

When should children be screened? Young children change rapidly, especially in social-emotional development (Gallerani and others, 1982). Individual growth factors may cause problems to appear later or early problems may be overcome with further development and learning. Therefore, further screening should be done periodically.

How should screening information be used? Problematic children should be assessed diagnostically and results used to guide decisions about the programs children need. Otherwise, children may be:

- unfairly excluded from needed services or placed inappropriately
- kept in a program that no longer meets their needs
- subjected to lowered teacher expectations, diluted curriculum or narrow homogeneous groupings, constricting their opportunities to learn (Gredler, 1984).

Conclusions

Screening to identify children who may be prone to academic problems or eligible for specialized educational services is now prevalent at school entry and likely to continue. To insure that all such children are correctly identified, subsequently assessed, and ultimately offered appropriate education, educators should:

- clarify the purpose of screening for teacher, parents, administrators, and any others involved
- keep informed about research concerning screening tools and their usefulness
- adopt procedures that screen for current levels of functioning in a broad range of domains
- rescreen periodically and assess diagnostically to confirm children's needs
- keep standards for curricula and instruction appropriate for the vast majority of eligible children, customizing learning activities for individuals.

Screening programs should be used to identify those children who may need special kinds of help to function well in school, not to exclude them from programs for which they are legally eligible. Sound, ethical practice is to accept children in all their variety, identify any special needs they have, and offer them the best possible opportunity to grow and learn.

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SECOND-CHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HISPANIC DROPOUTS

While the recent emphasis on strengthening early childhood interventions for at-risk youth is essential, such efforts do not help the approximately 1.8 million Hispanic youths between the ages of 18 and 24 who have already left school without the skills they need to earn a living wage. In a recently completed study, *Too Late to Patch: Reconsidering Second-Chance Opportunities for Hispanic and Other Dropouts*, The Hispanic Policy Development Project (HPDP) examined programs designed to help Hispanic dropouts avoid a lifetime at the margins of society and of the economy. This digest is based on HPDP's findings and recommendations.

The Characteristics of Hispanic Youth

At-risk Hispanic youth do not constitute a homogeneous group whose problems will respond to a single solution. But they do all share many special characteristics that must be considered in providing appropriate social services, and a sense of hopelessness and powerlessness that discourages them from returning to school or taking advantage of job training programs.

Hispanic-American populations are most heavily concentrated in the inner-cities of California, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas—all states where once-prevalent unskilled occupations are declining, and where employment prospects must be improved generally in order for job programs for Hispanics to succeed. Because they are geographically concentrated, they are particularly vulnerable to regional economic downturns. Many are also not competent in English, further limiting both their career potential and their mobility.

Money is a high priority need among Hispanic youth. Hispanics work more hours as students than any other group, and after leaving high school, the need for immediate income motivates a large proportion to accept underemployment instead of seeking supplementary job training. Thus, they are more likely to benefit from programs that offer a combination of work and study than from those that are purely educational.

Job Training for Hispanic Youths

The U.S. is already spending a sizable sum on providing job training to Hispanic youths, from which there is not a commensurate return in employability. In the current cost-cutting legislative environment, what are conceived as comprehensive, individualized training services often emerge as under-funded, bare-bones initiatives that operate in a vacuum, and succeed in benefiting only the minimally at-risk. What little experience there has been with enriched, long-term programs has suggested, however, that they do indeed work.

The need for these programs has become even more critical as traditional sources of unskilled employment offering a living wage rapidly disappear. Many unskilled, relatively well-paid industrial jobs—such as those formerly available on automobile assembly lines—have been replaced by positions requiring highly developed skills. And today's high-tech armed forces—once a source of subsidized job training—are increasingly closed to unskilled dropouts. This escalating mismatch between available workers and jobs will not only undermine the ability of business and industry to compete economically, but will also create crushing social burdens.

The second-chance job training options that now exist for dropouts are inadequate. The Job Partnership Training Act (JPTA) of 1983, for example, is so limited in its funding and so restrictive in its requirements that it seems to present its beneficiaries with more barriers than opportunities.

There can be no question that JPTA programs will not benefit the populations they purport to serve without receiving a substantial increase in funding. The Act must also be restructured so that renewal of programs does not depend so heavily upon immediate success. Furthermore, the Private Industry Councils (PICs) that administer JPTA programs must become better informed about the problems the programs are intended to solve.

Meeting the Special Training Needs of Dropouts

A wide range of programs are needed to help Hispanic dropouts gain full employment, and an evaluation mechanism should be built into each. Over time, a record of successful strategies will emerge that will help to inform the continued efforts of legislators and policymakers to maximize the return on investment of public funds. Among the most promising types of programs are the following:

Adult Programs. For many older, long-term dropouts, intervention becomes particularly problematic. Even the minimal academic skills they once had probably eroded over time, leaving them ineligible for programs with minimum skills requirements. Also, because Hispanics tend to form families earlier than do other groups, remote residential programs such as those offered by the Job Corps are often not appropriate for them. Adult education programs and remedial college programs can help meet the needs of older dropouts. Services designed to reach young mothers can be effectively delivered in combination with early-childhood programs. Intensive outreach efforts are needed to attract these dropouts to the appropriate programs that do exist.

Youth Programs. Programs designed to help more recent dropouts must recognize that these youths often have profound human needs stemming from dysfunctional living environments as well as educational needs, and that short-term financial needs must be met before long-term eductional goals can be addressed.

Schools or other government agencies should be made responsible for monitoring the progress of students even after they have left school. Alternative schools should be made available to students who have failed in a traditional educational setting. Above all, personal and career counseling must be made readily available to all youths who need it.

Work Study Programs. Dropouts must be able to combine education with work in order to enter the economic mainstream. On-the-job training programs should ideally teach academic skills through practical application, and provide the analytical skills needed to transfer the knowledge gained from one job to another. If programs do not provide living stipends, they must be made flexible enough to allow students to support themselves while they learn. Training partnerships with businesses and labor unions are essential to making these second-chance work-and-learn programs work.

The concept of apprenticeships, such as those long sponsored by trade unions, can be expanded to offer at-risk students job-guarantee incentives to stay in school. Older dropouts can receive guaranteed employment in return for fulfilling work-study contracts. Employers who offer young Hispanics low-level service jobs can be given incentives to combine employment with education. For example, fast-food businesses might receive rewards for offering their workers remediation in English. The objective is to make work an educational experience for everybody.

Immigrant Progams. The problems of Hispanic workers will continue to compound as their numbers are swelled by the high entry rate of Hispanic immigrants, most of whom will be poorly educated. Immigrant dropouts have special needs, including bilingual orientation and referral services, as well as cultural transition programs. Hispanic immigrants would doubtless benefit from the types of resettlement programs that are offered to other ethnic group refugees.

Program for Parents. Young Hispanic mothers cannot take advantage of training or educational opportunities until the needs of their children are met. Hispanic mothers need to be allowed to work a reduced schedule while retaining some of their fringe benefits. There is also a need for employer-sponsored childcare.

Providing Jobs

Although an atmosphere of general economic expansion creates an increase in the number of jobs available to all workers, there must be a change in the kinds of jobs available to Hispanics in order for them to prosper. National growth alone is unlikely to enable low-skilled, low-income Hispanics to defeat under-employment.

Government Programs. Those federal programs that benefit all states equally do not take into account that Hispanics are geographically concentrated. So-called "trigger" programs do not help Hispanics when localized Hispanic unemployment is high, but the national jobless rates to which the programs are "pegged" remain low. An equitable service-distribution policy would concentrate funds for job programs in areas with the greatest density of the most disadvantaged Hispanics.

In addition, where improved opportunities are persistently lacking, government funds can be used to create jobs that will also develop skills marketable elsewhere.

Income transfer benefits (such as Aid for Families with Dependent Children) can be used to subsidize the job training programs of private employers if workers are allowed to continue receiving them while they are preparing for new careers. Such a subsidy will also induce mothers with dependent children to enter the workforce if they can do so without compromising their living standard or health care benefits.

Job Ladder Programs. The "baby bust," which has caused a shortage of professional workers in some occupations, can provide the impetus for job ladder programs, in which training can help entry-level workers move into higher-level positions as their skills increase.

Public Works Programs. The imminent massive effort to improve the nation's infrastructure will be concentrated in the areas where most Hispanics live. New public works projects will provide jobs for well-trained workers, but slight opportunity for the unskilled. Criteria for accepting bids for these construction projects can encourage the creation of job-training opportunities for disadvantaged workers where Hispanic unemployment and under-employment is most prevalent.

Entrepreneurship Programs. Well-paid jobs for Hispanics with limited education can be created by encouraging Hispanic entrepreneurship, as long as strong back-up support is made available until fledgling managers gain business experience.

Job Improvement. Jobs that Hispanics already hold can be improved. Increasing the minimum wage will provide additional income for the families of low-wage earners. Increasing the Earned Income Tax Credit will improve take-home pay without increasing wages. Establishing a national health insurance program, extending unemployment insurance coverage to smaller firms, and providing fringe benefits to part-time workers will improve economic security for Hispanic families.

Providing new training and employment opportunities, restructuring jobs, and improving benefits are all essential to extending equitable employment practices to Hispanics.

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HIGHLIGHTS

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Selected Issues in Elementary Guidance

Many of the problems which interfere with the elementary educational experience arise from difficulties outside the school. Some are the result of changes in the traditional family structure and function; i.e., increases in the number of working mothers with school-age children, in divorce/separation rates and the number of single-parent families, and in geographic mobility. Other problems may stem more specifically from ineffective parent-child relationships. Whatever the source, the elementary school counselor is in a unique position to help students, school personnel, families, and the community to work toward overcoming these difficulties.

School Phobia

School phobia is defined as absence from school because of emotional disturbance in the child. Family relationships are clearly involved, and the phobic reaction often stems from separation anxiety, based on exaggerated parent-child dependencies.

A range of disturbance is possible — from temporary, though often acute, anxiety to severe character disorders. The former usually is found in 5-9 year olds, exhibiting sudden onset with uncharacteristic, dramatic, and persistent clinging and misbehavior. For the latter, generally found in adolescence, a primary diagnosis of school phobia may be inappropriate since the phobic symptoms represent long-standing psychological disturbance and delayed age-appropriate development.

Diagnostic criteria for school phobia include: morbid fear of school; somatic complaints such as nausea, headaches, drowsiness; disruptive school behavior; and prolonged absence, where the child stays at home with the parents' knowledge and, to some extent, cooperation.

Interventions for School Phobia

The behavioral approach is the most practical way for the school counselor to be involved in treating school phobia, because it leaves the clinician, appropriately, with the responsibility for delving into the deeper causes of neurosis. In this approach, the phobia is treated as a learned fear, and the first job of the counselor is to determine what in the environment is maintaining that fear.

The behavioral intervention plan formulated for practicing mental health specialists by Blagg (1981) incorporates the following steps:

1. A detailed clarification of the problems, involving elimination of possible medical causes, and identification and investigation of precipitating and maintaining factors.
2. Desensitization of child and parent worries.
3. Elimination of maintaining factors through contingency management (parent education is important in this phase).
4. Return to full-time attendance even if it must be forced.
5. Follow-up to monitor subsequent absences.

Early diagnosis and prompt treatment are essential to overcoming school phobia. By working with the child, parents, and school personnel, the counselor can effect the environmental changes necessary to the management of school phobia. The behavioral approach expands the counselor's role to include crisis problems once handled entirely by clinicians outside the school setting.

Transient Children

Nearly 6 million children, aged 5-13, are involved each year in moving. For many of them it is not a new experience; research indicates that families who have moved several times are more likely to move again than families who have never moved.

Studies of the effects of geographic mobility on children's emotional and cognitive development have produced conflicting results. Suggested negative effects include disruption of language development and socialization, development of disbelief in oneself, lowered school achievement, lessened motivation and ambition, an increased likelihood of early school withdrawal, and poor reading achievement compared to peers.

Some data indicate that mobility heightens achievement differences that already exist, improving the test scores of intelligent children and depressing the scores of those with lower intelligence. On the positive side, there is evidence that young children benefit from moving by gaining self-reliance and adaptability.

Although the effects of geographic relocation are not clear, moving requires new students to face several difficulties: problems of integration because of delayed records; peer rejection until they win acceptance through a system they must first discover; adjustment to an unknown building, principal, and teacher; and adjustment to a different curriculum.

Interventions for Transient Children

How effectively young children cope with moving can be influenced by the assistance they receive. Counselors can work to develop a *systematic* program for dealing with new students. The following steps have been found to be successful:

1. A planned, prompt transfer of records, within and between school districts, to ensure continuity in the educational process.
2. An orientation program for all new students and their families (e.g., a tour of the school and an introduction to all school staff; a big brother or sister to assist each new student during the transition period; a bulletin to parents listing the new families, their addresses and the ages of their children; a Newcomers' Day early in the term with school-wide get-acquainted activities; a reception committee to meet new students, learn about them, and introduce them to the group).

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3. Guided discussion in the classroom, or in group counseling sessions, to help students acquire understanding and empathy for the difficulties new students encounter. Student-generated ideas for helping, growing out of such discussions, are more likely to be carried out.

An overall counseling/educational focus which emphasizes the development of self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-direction as well as a positive attitude toward change will provide the support a child needs to face the experience of moving with flexibility and independence.

Latchkey Children

Latchkey children are those left in self-care or in the care of a sibling under 14 years of age for a significant portion of most days, usually 2-3 hours (sometimes longer). While the exact number is uncertain, a conservative estimate suggests that at least 25% (possibly 6 million) of school-age children with working parents are in self-care regularly.

Research on the effects of lack of supervision has produced inconclusive results. Unsupervised girls were found to have marked deficits in cognitive functioning and personality adjustment, while no differences were found between supervised and unsupervised children compared on sex-role concept measures, adjustment test scores, academic achievement, and intelligence scores.

Interviews with latchkey children, parents of latchkey children and former latchkey children from all socioeconomic groups have revealed a common set of concerns and experiences. For the children, there are unusually high levels of fear (of assault, noises, the dark, storms), and loneliness and boredom. These are related to the safety restrictions imposed by parents (e.g., going straight home from school, staying inside, having no friends over). Parents expressed feelings of guilt and concern for their children's safety.

Interventions for Latchkey Children

School counselors can help latchkey children, without being seen as judgmental of the parents or interfering in family arrangements. When possible, the counselor should identify students in self-care. Group and individual counseling can help them express and deal with their fears.

Survival skills training, including steps for dealing with emergencies, can be incorporated into the curriculum for children and offered as parent education programs. Numerous publications are available on this subject, some specifically for latchkey families. Basic child care/development instruction can be given to help older siblings left in charge.

On a broader scale, counselors can actively seek to bring about community and system changes that will alleviate the problems of latchkey children. Examples of existing programs include after-school care programs (not just more school), check-in programs, and after-school call-in lines to provide help in problem solving, emergency assistance, or simply listening and responding.

The Single-Parent Family

It has been estimated that by 1990, one half of all children will spend at least some time in a single-parent family. Research on children's adjustment to changes in family structures has shown the following to be influential: age at the time of change, quality of the relationship with one or both parents, the reasons a child attributes to one parent's absence, and the attitude of others toward the changed family structure.

For elementary school children, research has identified several possible changes in personality, behavior, and academic performance: feelings of helplessness, fear of abandonment, and loneliness; increased attention-seeking behavior, aggressiveness, and rebellion; increased restlessness, daydreaming, and difficulties in concentration; and decreased cognitive functioning as measured by IQ, achievement and scholastic tests.

Interventions for Single-Parent Families

A review of current literature yields suggestions for ways in which counselors can help children, parents, and school systems deal with the problems facing single parent families:

1. Implement group and peer counseling sessions in the school setting for children of single-parent families; ensure that children do not feel stigmatized or singled out for their participation.
2. Initiate inservice training for teachers and other school personnel to provide information on changing family patterns and to help eliminate bias and stereotypes toward single-parent families.
3. Provide counseling groups for parents and children.
4. Update school records to include information about the non-custodial parent and whether or not he/she should obtain report cards, school notices, etc.
5. Promote school functions that do not require the presence of a parent of a specified sex, or attendance during the parents' working day.

Although not all children are affected in the same way or to the same extent, the single-parent family structure does appear to affect children's school behavior and performance. A needs assessment can identify the primary difficulties facing children and parents in a particular school. Whether the resulting services are direct, indirect or preventive, the school's role can be crucial — it may be one of the few stable elements during the upheavals of changing family structures.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Fact Sheet

Selecting A College: A Checklist Approach

Finding, selecting and applying for the right college or university is an important and sometimes tough assignment that many high school students and their parents have to face. It involves letter writing, telephoning, research, weighing alternatives, and plain hard thinking (*College-Bound Digest*, 1983). But with planning and a step-by-step approach, chances of making a good decision are high. This fact sheet provides a checklist for selecting a college, including the following: student objectives and college characteristics, selection by computers and guidebooks, gathering information, applying for admission, responding to admission offers, and a list of resource documents.

Starting With A List of Objectives

Selecting a college has lasting effects: what students become four years later is influenced by which college they choose, and how they go about getting into it once they have selected it (*The Insider's Guide*, 1981). No two colleges are exactly alike, and some are *very* different. There are more than 3,000 colleges, universities, technical institutes, junior colleges, seminaries, and other institutions of higher education in the United States (*The College Handbook*, 1984).

A good beginning in selecting a college is to make a list of objectives, both educational and personal. High school courses need to be planned early with college entrance requirements in mind. The purpose is not to make decisions about a course of study that may turn out to be premature, but to keep the options open until such decisions can be made.

The areas of educational and personal interest that students most frequently cite as important in selecting a college include the following:

☐ Location (state, city, region)
☐ Type of institution (two-year community college, four-year university, etc.)
☐ Enrollment by sex
☐ Religious affiliation, if any
☐ Enrollment size
☐ Academic calendar
☐ Campus environment
☐ Majors or course offerings
☐ Housing (on-campus, off-campus)
☐ Cost
☐ Financial aid
☐ Student activities
☐ Athletics
☐ General academic reputation
☐ Social life
☐ Entrance requirements
☐ Teaching reputation or ability of faculty

Obviously, not all of these items will be of high priority, but using them as a checklist helps to specify the range of choices. Although students may want to make changes or modifications in the list as they review colleges, it is important not to eliminate any of these areas until students know which are essential and which are not. Even then, it is quite possible that no college will meet *all* of an individual's needs.

Using Computer Programs and Guidebooks

The microcomputer is an excellent tool in the college selection process. The College Board's College Explorer, Peterson's College Selection Service for Four-Year Colleges, and Peterson's Selection Service for Two-Year Colleges are microcomputer programs that assist students in locating colleges with the features they want. A complete summary can be displayed on the screen, or a list of colleges that match the students' requirements can be printed for later reference. Many high school guidance offices and public libraries now offer these services. If the service is not available, the same information can be obtained, with a little effort, from the following commercial guidebooks:

- *Lovejoy's College Guide*
- *The College Handbook*
- *Peterson's Annual Guide*
- *One Hundred Top Colleges: How to Choose & Get In*
- *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges*
- *Barron's Guide to the Best, Most Popular, & Most Exciting Colleges*
- *American Universities and Colleges*
- *The College Blue Book*

College counselors recommend these standard guides, which are updated annually. They differ in style and content, and some go beyond facts and statistics to provide "inside" information gathered from students and alumni.

Acquiring More Information

After drawing up a list of preferred colleges, students are ready to gather information and explore their choices in depth. The more information they acquire, the more likely they will make a good decision. Making a file on each college and keeping copies of correspondence, applications, personal notes, financial aid information, and names of personal contacts and conversations with people on campus can serve as excellent sources for making the final choice.

The primary sources for gathering information on colleges include the following:

- **College catalogs** — basic source of information about a college containing detailed information on admission procedures and policies, academic and degree requirements, costs, student life, and financial aid. Available directly from the college, or sometimes from a high school counselor, school library, or public library.
- **College representatives** — students may meet with representatives from colleges, such as the director of admissions and admissions officers, to obtain more information or answer individual questions.

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- **College visits** — campus visits are one of the most effective means to determine if the college is the right one (*College-Bound Digest*, 1983). Many colleges provide campus tours and programs which give an excellent opportunity to get a feeling of size and atmosphere. Ideally, these visits can be combined with an admissions interview.
- **College students, faculty, or recent alumni** — talking to current students is an excellent way to gather first-hand impressions and personal opinions about a college and student life. If it is not economically or geographically possible to visit the campus, the admissions office can provide names of alumni representatives who live in the student's area.
- **High school counselors** — as trained professionals, guidance counselors can provide invaluable information.
- **Parents and friends** — according to a group of recent college-bound students, family and friends are one of the best sources of information about colleges (*The College Handbook*, 1984). They can be a good source of information, opinions, and trustworthy advice.
- **College fairs/college nights** — many high school guidance offices schedule regular visits from college representatives during the senior year. College fairs are particularly helpful to those who have not had the opportunity to visit many college campuses or talk with college representatives (*Guide to Colleges in the Midwest*, 1984). These fairs provide an excellent opportunity to talk to many college representatives and gather information the same day.
- **Commercial guidebooks** — see section, "Using Computer Programs and Guidebooks."

Applying for Admission

The procedures for applying for admission vary from one college to another, but usually the first step is to obtain an application form from the college. This should be done as early as possible in the senior year, or at the end of the junior year if seeking early admission. Students applying for financial aid may also be required to meet early deadlines.

Filling out the application completely and carefully is very important. In addition, many colleges require a recommendation from the secondary school counselor, administrator, or teacher. It is the individual student's responsibility to file the completed application on time, meet deadline dates for submitting test scores, and file financial aid applications. The school counselor is the key resource for information on test scores, financial aid forms, deadline dates, and other particulars.

- **Application fee** — most colleges charge an application fee, usually not refundable even if the application is rejected.
- **Academic records** — the counselor submits a secondary school transcript or college transfer record of student courses, final grades, and test scores.
- **Admission test scores** — for many students, the college selection process begins with the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT), which is taken in the fall of the junior year. High school counselors advise students which of the college entrance tests to take — Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), American College Testing Program Test (ACT), Achievement Test (ACH), and the Advanced Placement Tests (AP) — and when to take them.
- **Letters of recommendation** — some colleges require one or more letters of recommendation from a teacher, counselor, clergy, alumnus, or adult member of the community.
- **Essay** — a personal essay or autobiographical statement is required by some institutions, particularly four-year, private colleges (*The College Handbook*, 1984).

Responding to Admission Offers

Once students have heard from all the colleges to which they have applied, it is their responsibility to send a letter of acceptance or rejection of admission offers. According to a 1980 report on undergraduate admissions policies published by the College Board, 83 percent of all college applicants can expect to be accepted by their first-choice college (*The College Handbook*, 1984).

In Summary

The steps described in this fact sheet can serve students as a useful checklist for finding, selecting, and applying to college. By following these steps, students can lay the basic groundwork for a rewarding college experience.

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7

Executive Summary

ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report 7, 1985

Serving More Than Students

A Critical Need for College Student Personnel Services

Peter H. Garland, Pennsylvania Department of Education

ASHE-ERIC®

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Colleges and universities today are confronted with a variety of changing conditions that demand attention; indeed, the formulation of appropriate and effective responses to a changing world has become increasingly important to the survival and viability of institutions. Changes in society, in the higher education enterprise, and in the types and characteristics of students are among those issues that must be addressed.

Increasingly, the efforts of student affairs aimed at improving quality of life, integrating new student groups, and attracting and retaining students are becoming critical to institutions attempting to maintain enrollments of qualified students, assure placement of graduates, develop supportive alumni, and enhance academic involvement. Institutions' employment of these strategies in response to changing conditions creates opportunities for student affairs professionals to become leaders within the institution as they offer important contributions to institutional vitality. This time is a significant period in the evolution of student affairs.

To What Changes Must Student Affairs Organizations Respond?

Institutions and their student affairs organizations are confronted with various changes in their contexts and clienteles. The first group of these trends, leading to change in society, is witnessed by a decreasing birth rate, growth of minority subpopulations, the evolving information society, growing narcissism, and the legacy of the baby boom. Second, institutions and student affairs must respond to changes in the higher education enterprise—changing financial conditions, increased planning, increased judicial intervention, and the growing application of management techniques to higher education. Third, students are changing. Minority participation is growing, vocationalism is increasing, and students' characteristics, values, and needs are changing.

In What Ways Can Student Affairs Provide Leadership?

In response to changing conditions, institutions are devoting efforts to managing enrollments, using institutional marketing strategies to attract new student clienteles and to retain current students; increasing private funding; planning carefully and managing resources effectively; modifying programs and services to meet changing needs; and introducing activities aimed at enhancing students' involvement in college life.

Current efforts support the increasing congruity between the goals of student affairs and the goals of the institution; efforts by student affairs organizations aimed at the individual and group development, student integration, and student involvement, once regarded as peripheral to the academic mission of the institution (McConnell 1970), have become increasingly important to institutions in their efforts to enhance institutional vitality. Student affairs departments are enhancing the involvement of students in the academic experience, engaging in preventive law, integrating new student groups, participating in the recruitment and retention of students, and helping to develop supportive alumni (Baldridge, Kemerer, and Green 1982). As student affairs professionals achieve institutional support in their pursuit of the traditional goals of student development, recognition of an expanded role for student affairs is demanded.

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What New Role Is Emerging?

The student affairs organization shares the orientations of the three major campus groups—faculty, students, and administrators—and its position on the borders of these groups may be its greatest strength.

> *Our uniqueness as student personnel workers rests on our ability to fashion significant educational environments, using the resources, values, norms, and opportunities of the variety of constituencies on our campuses. To the extent that we are successful in our innovative work, we will be respected, not because of position, but as a result of the impacts we have on campus life. Truly, student personnel workers have the opportunities to be central figures for campus improvement in an era when resources must be perceived as newly combined rather than as new* (Silverman 1980, p. 12).

The term "integrator" is appropriate for the student affairs professional who integrates student development and institutional development.

"An alert, assertive response to these forces [changing conditions] will make student affairs essential to institutional effectiveness and therefore worthy of adequate support" (Shaffer 1984, p. 112). Recognition of the importance of student affairs to institutional vitality is growing, and student affairs administrators must assume leadership in formulating and managing institutional responses to changing conditions.

Serving as integrators of goals within institutions, student affairs professionals will become more centrally involved in the direction of the institution if they are able to build stronger bridges to the academic and administrative communities. The challenges are many, but student affairs professionals have the opportunity to lead efforts that will affect the entire institution. And goals, priorities, and values will be better integrated as a result of those efforts.

What Implications Does This New Role Have?

A new role for student affairs calls for changes in the programs and services offered by student affairs, the professional skills required by student affairs administrators, and the content of the preparation and development of professionals. Several programs and services stand to be enhanced by the changing role: enrollment management, programs and services designed to serve the needs of nontraditional students, and activities designed to enhance career planning and placement.

To assume a stronger position of leadership within the institution, student affairs professionals must possess a wider repertoire of skills. In addition to the traditional skills in human relations, student affairs professionals must develop the organizational skills demanded by an expanded role within the institution, including those directed at general management and planning, resource management, information management, institutional politics, and research and evaluation.

The development of new skills for student affairs professionals has clear implications for the preparation and continuing professional education of individuals in the profession. Currently, most preparation programs and recommended curricula for the preparation of new professionals concentrate on counseling and the human relations skills necessary for entry-level practitioners and pay little attention to the administrative or organizational skills demanded by the emerging role of integrator. A changing role for student affairs demands different skills. Therefore, graduate programs at both the master's and doctoral levels must embrace such topics as organizational behavior and development, management and planning in higher education, and the development of higher education. Further, continuing professional education must work toward the development and enhancement of these skills in an organized and comprehensive fashion.

A new role also creates challenges for the application of student development. If student development is to offer guidance to the profession and become more useful to the student affairs integrator, then several issues must be addressed: (1) the understanding and application of student development within the field to enhance the theoretical credibility of student affairs professionals; (2) the expansion of student development theory to encompass increasing numbers of nontraditional students; and (3) the integration of student and organizational development (Borland 1980).

To better serve as integrators within the institution, student affairs professionals must:

1. assess the environment of the institution
2. comprehend institutional issues and internal politics
3. develop professional credibility with faculty
4. become experts on students' expectations, needs, and interests and be able to articulate them to others in the institution
5. be able to explain the goals of student affairs and student development to others in the institution in terms that are meaningful to them
6. contribute to the quality of the academic experience
7. contribute to the effective and efficient management of the institution and be prepared to take leadership in the formulation of institutional responses to changing conditions
8. develop appropriate skills.

Furthermore, institutions, if they are to take advantage of the real and potential contributions of student affairs should:

1. recognize, enhance, and support the efforts of student affairs
2. consider student affairs full partners in the institution
3. challenge student affairs professionals to make greater contributions to the institution.

In addition, student personnel preparation programs must be revised to develop the skills necessary for the profession, including greater attention to management and organizational skills. And finally, the national associations for student affairs must:

1. provide direction for new professional roles
2. promote continuing professional education at all levels.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Sex Equity in Guidance and Counseling

Introduction

Societal changes over the past 15 years have brought a new awareness of the need to expand opportunities for women and minorities. Sex equity received a big boost with the passage of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Women's Educational Equity Act. Several legislative and private initiatives gave impetus to the creation of hundreds of programs in schools, colleges, and communities to reduce bias and expand options for girls and women (McCune & Matthews, 1978). These have been complemented in recent years by a few programs which address new options for boys and men. It is the purpose of this document to highlight progress in sex equity, including current status and trends, and the role of counselors and educators as change agents in reducing sex bias.

Counseling-Based Programs

There seems to be agreement that counselors should play a major role in helping to remove barriers and create options for both sexes and that nonsexist counseling is essential for optimal growth of students. Yet, it is clearly not the role of counselors alone. Indeed, all types of personnel have collaborated or worked independently to achieve sex equity. Project BORN FREE (Build Options, Reassess Norm, Free Roles through Educational Equity), a multimedia training program for counselors and educators working with children, youth, and adults, was one of the first to link career development, sex-role stereotyping, and social change and to emphasize changes in roles of both women and men (Hansen, 1981). While interest grew in sex-equity throughout the 70's, by the 80's, a call for new school reform totally ignored sex equity issues, and from 1980 on, emphasis on sex equity in education began to diminish. While much progress had been made, the problem was far from resolved.

Current Realities

There is no doubt that new options have opened up for women and that the equity gap has begun to close in secondary school subjects, in higher education access, and in the workforce (NACWEP, 1988). Nonetheless, problems remain, especially for girls and women who are minorities, poor, disabled, and outside the opportunity structure. Counselors and educators are in a position to provide clients and students with realistic information concerning future life role options and to help them with adequate preparation for these future roles. In doing so, it is essential that counselors and educators possess accurate information on important societal trends. Recent data indicate that:

- Women today comprise 44% of the labor force;
- The average woman can be expected to work about 30 years of her life;
- In 1986, of the married couples with families, over half were dual earner couples;
- Most single parent families are maintained by women (Women, Public Policy, and Development Project, 1987).
- In the year 2000, 80% of new entrants into the workforce will be women, minorities, and immigrants (Gallup, 1988).

Adolescent Sex-Role Attitudes

While the interventions of the past 15 years doubtless have had an impact on sex equity (and program evaluations and statistics attest to this), there is abundant evidence that the impact of socialization on sex-role attitude is deepseated (Hansen, 1984), and a huge gap still remains between attitudes and reality. For example, according to recent studies, the expectations of adolescents and young adults concerning their future life roles are in sharp contrast with the statistics on current societal realities. When Herzog and Bachman (1982) investigated the sex-role attitudes of 3,000 high school seniors, they found relatively traditional attitudes toward family roles. Both males and females were opposed to women with small children working outside the home. They also expected a traditional division of labor, with women primarily responsible for the children and men bearing financial responsibility for the family. Similar findings are reported in an extensive study of 14-18 year old Minnesota high school students regarding their plans for future educational, work, and family roles (Hedin, Erickson, Simon, & Walker, 1985). These studies, and numerous others, have shown that young people's career choices still reflect stereotypical views of what is appropriate for their gender, although they may know a wide range of choices is open to them. Discrepancies between adolescent expectations and realities would suggest that, as educators and counselors, we need to continue to prepare students and clients for a rapidly changing society and to aid them in developing their values, skills, interests, and life choices apart from sex role stereotypes.

Sex Equity and Counselor Attitudes

In working with clients and students to prepare for and to make choices about life roles, it is essential for counselors and educators to be aware of their own biases and stereotypes and how these attitudes may influence their work. Broverman, Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz, & Vogel (1970) investigated the extent to which counselors and other mental health workers held stereotypic sex-role attitudes. The results of this, now classic, study reflect stereotypic views of men and women and equate the characteristics of a mentally healthy adult with those of a healthy male, implying very different standards of mental

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health for women and men. Following this study, there has been a burgeoning of studies on sex bias in counseling and education, with some researchers implying the furor was "much ado about nothing," and other researchers and practitioners pointing to countless examples of bias in counseling and therapy. Enough were convinced that during the 70's and early 80's, schools and colleges played major roles in addressing these issues (Sadker & Sadker, 1982; Klein, 1985).

The attention given to counselors' sex-role attitudes in the past two decades raises questions about what impact this has had on present counselor attitudes. Using methodology similar to Broverman et al., (1970), O'Malley and Richardson (1985) found, in contrast, that the subjects perceived healthy adults as possessing characteristics stereotypically associated with both men and women. However, similar to Broverman et al., counselors continued to respond in a stereotypic manner when asked to predict characteristics of an adult man or woman. In spite of mixed results, it appears that some counselors and educators continue to have stereotypic expectations of female and male clients and students.

New Face of Sex Equity Issues

The combination of societal changes and continuing, though more limited, interventions has made it necessary for counselors and educators to begin to rethink the current status of sex equity and their role in it. The new face of sex equity issues includes the following:

- Recognition that sex role and stereotyping issues affect men as well as women.
- Emergence of diverse family types, including two-earner families, single parents, and blended families.
- Growing recognition of the linkage between work and family and implications for life career planning and division of labor.
- Movement toward holistic life planning which emphasizes balance in life roles and a more integrated approach to life planning.
- Recognition of the need to challenge continuing examples of attitudes and behaviors which devalue girls and women.

Counselors/Educators as Change Agents

This brief review indicates that while much has been done to promote sex equity, much remains to be done. Counselors and educators committed to the development of human beings and the utilization of human potential, as well as to democratic values, can, if they are willing, assume a much more proactive role in effecting positive change. The following recommendations suggest ways in which counselors and educators can be change agents for sex equity:

- Examine their own attitudes and practices to assure that they have eliminated the subtle as well as blatant attitudes and stereotypes regarding both sexes.
- Assure that new knowledge about the changing roles of women and men, work/family intersection, stereotyping and socialization, and gender equity are a visible part of curriculum and programs.
- Advocate for public policy changes that bring policies more into consonance with the changing realities of women and men in work and family.
- Influence career guidance programs to include more about life roles, purpose and meaning in life choices, and integrative life planning—not just occupational choice and the paid work role.
- Teach students, teachers, and prospective teachers that they can be positive agents for change in developing more egalitarian relationships between women and men.

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ERIC Digest

The Shy Child

Marion C. Hyson and Karen Van Trieste

Shyness is a common but little understood emotion. Everyone has felt ambivalent or self-conscious in new social situations. However, at times shyness may interfere with optimal social development and restrict children's learning. This digest (1) describes types and manifestations of shyness, (2) reviews research on genetic, temperamental, and environmental influences on shyness, (3) distinguishes between normal and problematic shyness, and (4) suggests ways to help the shy child.

What Is Shyness?

The basic feeling of shyness is universal, and may have evolved as an adaptive mechanism used to help individuals cope with novel social stimuli. Shyness is felt as a mix of emotions, including fear and interest, tension and pleasantness. Increases in heart rate and blood pressure may occur. An observer recognizes shyness by an averted, downward gaze and physical and verbal reticence. The shy person's speech is often soft, tremulous, or hesitant. Younger children may suck their thumbs; some act coy, alternately smiling and pulling away (Izard and Hyson, 1986).

Shyness is distinguishable from two related behavior patterns: wariness and social disengagement. Infant wariness of strangers lacks the ambivalent approach/avoidance quality that characterizes shyness. Some older children may prefer solitary play and appear to have low needs for social interaction, but experience none of the tension of the genuinely shy child.

Children may be vulnerable to shyness at particular developmental points. Fearful shyness in response to new adults emerges in infancy. Cognitive advances in self-awareness bring greater social sensitivity in the second year. Self-conscious shyness—the possibility of embarrassment—appears at 4 or 5. Early adolescence ushers in a peak of self-consciousness (Buss, 1986).

What Situations Make Children Feel Shy?

New social encounters are the most frequent causes of shyness, especially if the shy person feels herself to be the focus of attention. An "epidemic of shyness" (Zimbardo and Radl, 1981) has been attributed to the rapidly changing social environment and competitive pressures of school and work with which 1980s children and adults must cope. Adults who constantly call attention to what others think of the child, or who allow the child little autonomy, may encourage feelings of shyness.

Why Are Some Children More Shy Than Others?

Some children are dispositionally shy: they are more likely than other children to react to new social situations with shy behavior. Even these children, however, may show shyness only in certain kinds of social encounters. Researchers have implicated both nurture and nature in these individual differences.

Some aspects of shyness are learned. Children's cultural background and family environment offer models of social behavior. Chinese children in day care have been found to be more socially reticent than Caucasians, and Swedish children report more social discomfort than Americans. Some parents, by labeling their children as shy, appear to encourage a self-fulfilling prophecy. Adults may cajole coyly shy children into social interaction, thus reinforcing shy behavior (Zimbardo and Radl, 1981).

There is growing evidence of a hereditary or temperamental basis for some variations of dispositional shyness. In fact, heredity may play a larger part in shyness than in any other personality trait (Daniels and Plomin, 1985). Adoption studies can predict shyness in adopted children from the biological mother's sociability. Extremely inhibited children show physiological differences from uninhibited children, including higher and more stable heart rates. From ages 2 to 5, the most inhibited children continue to show reticent behavior with new peers and adults (Reznick and others, 1986). Patterns of social passivity or inhibition are remarkably consistent in longitudinal studies of personality development.

Despite this evidence, most researchers emphasize that genetic influences probably account for only a small proportion of self-labeled shyness. Even hereditary predispositions can be modified. Adopted children do acquire some of the adoptive parents' social styles (Daniels and Plomin, 1985), and extremely inhibited toddlers sometimes become more socially comfortable through their parents' efforts (Reznick and others, 1986).

When Is Shyness a Problem?

Shyness can be a normal, adaptive response to potentially overwhelming social experience. By being somewhat shy, children can withdraw temporarily and gain a sense of control. Generally, as children gain experience with unfamiliar people, shyness wanes. In the absence of other difficulties, shy children have not been found to be significantly at-risk for psychiatric or behavior problems (Honig, 1987). In contrast, children who exhibit extreme shyness which is neither context-specific nor transient may be at some risk. Such children may lack social skills or have poor self-images (Sarafino, 1986). Shy children have been found to be less competent at initiating play with peers. School-age children who rate themselves as shy tend to like themselves less and consider themselves less friendly and more passive than their non-shy peers (Zimbardo and Radl, 1981). Such factors negatively affect others' perceptions. Zimbardo reports that shy people are often judged by peers to be less friendly and likeable than non-shy people. For all these reasons, shy children may be neglected by peers, and have few chances to develop social skills. Children who continue to be excessively shy into adolescence and adulthood describe themselves as being more lonely, and having fewer close friends and relationships with members of the opposite sex, than their peers.

Strategies for Helping a Shy Child

1. *Know and Accept the Whole Child.* Being sensitive to the child's interests and feelings will allow you to build a relationship with the child and show that you respect the child. This can make the child more confident and less inhibited.

2. *Build Self-esteem.* Shy children may have negative self-images and feel that they will not be accepted. Reinforce shy children for demonstrating skills and encourage their autonomy. Praise them often. "Children who feel good about themselves are not likely to be shy" (Sarafino, 1986, p. 191).

3. *Develop Social Skills.* Reinforce shy children for social behavior, even if it is only parallel play. Honig (1987) recommends teaching children "social skill words" ("Can I play, too?") and role playing social entry techniques. Also, opportunities for play with young children in one-on-one situations may allow shy children to become more assertive (Furman, Rahe, and Hartup, 1979). Play with new groups of peers permits shy children to make a fresh start and achieve a higher peer status.

4. *Allow the Shy Child to Warm Up to New Situations.* Pushing a child into a situation which he or she sees as threatening is not likely to help the child build social skills. Help the child feel secure and provide interesting materials to lure him or her into social interactions (Honig, 1987).

5. *Remember That Shyness Is Not All Bad.* Not every child needs to be the focus of attention. Some qualities of shyness, such as modesty and reserve, are viewed as positive (Jones, Cheek, and Briggs, 1986). As long as a child does not seem excessively uncomfortable or neglected around others, drastic interventions are not necessary.

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Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

SINGLE PARENTS: CAREER-RELATED ISSUES AND NEEDS

Today, 1 of every 4 families with children under the age of 18 is a single-parent family, up from 1 of every 10 in 1970. Nearly 60 percent of all children born in 1986 may spend 1 year or longer in a single-parent family before reaching age 18 (Norton and Glick 1986). Clearly a growing phenomenon, the single-parent family is often subject to extreme economic problems; single parents need special assistance with career development and vocational preparation. This ***ERIC Digest*** explores the nature of single parenthood and the special preemployment and employment needs of distinct types of single-parent families, highlighting the characteristics of effective career development programs to meet those needs.

Nature of Single Parenthood

Single parents commonly experience difficulties with role identity. Some social stigma is still attached to single-parent status regardless of how it was acquired. For single mothers, development of a positive identity is often hampered by their inability to support their families financially. Single parents often experience role strain from attempting to balance wage earner and parental responsibilities.

Lack of formal education and consequently of job skills limits access to occupations that provide enough income for an acceptable standard of living. Women are additionally hindered by socialization into traditionally female occupations that are low paying, perpetuating the cycle of poverty (Burge 1987).

Poverty is persistently linked with single-parent households, especially those headed by women. Such families are the poorest of all major demographic groups in the United States (Garfinkel and McLanahan 1986). Wage differences between men and women, arising from lack of labor market preparation or experience or from discrimination, reinforce low-income status.

Although child care is an issue for all parents, an overwhelming number of single parents cannot afford high-quality day care, a major barrier to attending career development and skills training programs as well as to maintaining employment.

Among the solutions to these problems are changes in public policy and public attitudes toward single-parent families and more adequate financial support and child-care systems. Another key is career development. In addition to employment and economic security, career education can improve the physical and emotional well-being of participants (Burge 1987).

Types of Single Parents

The vast majority of single-parent families are low income families consisting of a mother and her young children, characterized by a high percentage of minority representation and relatively little formal education. Three major subgroups of one-parent families have also been identified: displaced homemakers, adolescent mothers, and single fathers (Burge 1987).

Displaced Homemakers

Marital dissolution drastically reduces the new single-parent family's available income. Displaced homemakers are at an additional disadvantage because they often have little or no employment history, obsolete training or skills, low self-esteem, and external locus of control.

Adolescent Mothers

Each year in America, 1 in 10 teenage girls becomes pregnant. This vast subgroup of single parents faces many obstacles to self-sufficiency, such as lack of education, job readiness, and emotional maturity. Their crucial need to complete education and achieve employment goals is complicated by their immediate needs for food, housing, child care, and emotional support (***Time for Transition*** 1985).

Single Fathers

Although they generally have a more healthy economic status than their female counterparts, single fathers often find their sole child-rearing role conflicting with work expectations. They also find themselves filling social roles for which they are not prepared.

Career Development Needs of Single Parents

As the sole support of their families, single parents are concerned with obtaining a good job and achieving economic independence. However, job training and job placement can be effective in the long run only if other needs are also addressed. Program developers should consider the following aspects:

- Emotional support (counseling, peer groups, assistance with developing support systems)
- Job-seeking skills
- Basic skills instruction (especially literacy skills)
- Outreach and recruitment
- Child care
- Analysis of the role of gender in occupational choice
- Self-concept building
- Skills assessment
- The challenges of combining work and family roles
- Nontraditional job skills
- Parenthood education

Career Development Programs

Meeting the needs of the many types of one-parent families is a major social challenge. Program developers must offer a full range of services, from occupational exploration to job search assistance. Following are some examples of types of career development programs for single parents (Burge 1987).

High School Dropout Prevention Programs

Pregnant teens and teen parents are special targets for dropout prevention Effective programs should include basic academic skills as well as occupational preparation accurate information and guidance related to sexuality and family planning prenatal and family life instruction, and support networks of teachers and peers who can assist with low self-esteem, time and stress management and long- and short-term goal setting Pregnant teens and teen parents can participate in alternative high school programs or be mainstreamed in regular classrooms

Established Education Sites

Many single parents may feel more comfortable in the adult education atmosphere provided in area vocational centers and community colleges Such established sites already offer such services as basic literacy instruction personal and career counseling, assistance for reentry students and job placement Child-care centers at these sites would overcome one of the major barriers for single parents returning to school

Networks and Newsletters

Single parents frequently do not use the resources available to them due to the extensive time and effort needed to locate them or to discouraging past experiences (***Time for Transition*** 1985) Support and referral networks can help them identify the community agencies that offer assistance with legal problems health care emergency funds housing, shelter and protection, substance abuse, and other matters Such networks can also provide advice on determining eligibility, meeting requirements and negotiating for services with these agencies

Newsletters are an inexpensive strategy for communicating with, educating and supporting single parents They can be used to supplement group or individual career development activities Work homemaking, and child care demands often cause problems with attendance at formal programs making newsletters an effective outreach technique

Federally Funded Programs

The Carl D Perkins Vocational Education Act emphasizes support of increased vocational education opportunities for displaced homemakers and single parents among other groups Many sites in Florida have used Perkins Act funding for projects ranging from balancing family life, education and employment to increasing awareness of nontraditional careers achieving business ownership and assisting with day care and sick child care (The ERIC database contains descriptions of many Florida programs—see ED 285 039-049 and ED 285 988-999)

Title II-A of the Job Training Partnership Act provides assistance to persons who have experienced barriers to employment including displaced homemakers single heads of households and teenage parents Funding for support services can be used for child care to increase participation In addition the 6 percent set-aside provides incentive grants for serving the special needs of these groups

Policy Concerns

In addition to developing effective programs career educators can be advocates for public policy designed to assist single parents Policy changes are needed in the areas of employment discrimination recognition of nontraditional roles government and employer support of child care pay equity, social services for potential teen single parents and work environment alternatives In short policies that establish an equitable educational and economic climate for both sexes and all ethnic groups as well as recognition of single-parent families as a viable family form will benefit not only these families but society as a whole

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SOUTHEAST ASIAN ADOLESCENTS: IDENTITY AND ADJUSTMENT

Over the last years, the adjustment of adult refugees has tended to be evaluated by two elementary standards: economic sufficiency and proficiency in English —minimums for survival in a new land. Similarly, the adjustment of student refugees has been judged by how well they do in school and their fluency in English. Yet, refugees of all ages know that they need far more than jobs, grades, or even English to feel at home in their new country. They must be accepted and respected by the native population, and must adapt to a new culture without relinquishing the heritage that had been fundamental to their development so far.

Adolescent Refugees or Refugee Adolescents?

Most teenagers from all the Southeast Asian ethnic groups have adopted the dress, hairstyles and manners of American teenagers. Like many newcomers, they first take on the outward cultural traits of their American peers. Yet, internally, particularly among those who arrived in the United States as adolescents, the ethnic identity of Southeast Asian youth remains strong and specific: they see themselves as Hmong, Khmer, Vietnamese, Sino-Vietnamese, or Lao. Not only do they rarely make friends with American students, but they have few cross-ethnic friendships with other Southeast Asians (Goldstein, 1985; Peters, 1988). For example, Vietnamese youth who participate in gangs do so largely among themselves (Peters, 1988; Rumbaut & Ima, 1988).

Whether refugee teenagers are considered successful Americans or problem Southeast Asians, it is important to realize that they are operating out of four identity systems that at times overlap but more often are in conflict:

- Southeast Asian
- American
- refugee
- adolescent

Adolescents who migrated after the age of 11 have suffered particular stress. This is because they simultaneously had to pass through the *developmental crisis* of "identity formation," characteristic of adolescence, and the *historical crisis* of becoming a refugee (Nidorf, 1985).

School Success

Southeast Asian students have a reputation for having positive attitudes toward education and doing extremely well academically. In reality, though, not all students are excelling, often because of school-induced problems, such as indiscriminate age-grade matching, poorly designed and staffed English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) programs, premature mainstreaming (often into low-achieving classes), and general insensitivity of the school system to their special needs (Goldstein, 1985; Peters, 1988). Coming from much more authoritarian education systems, Southeast Asian students can also sometimes see their American schools as having no behavioral limits, and so become discipline problems (Wehrly & Nelson, 1986).

Prejudice

The significant influx of Asian immigrants and refugees over the past decade has led to anti-Asian sentiments, and even acts of violence around the country (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1988). No different from their elders, white, black, and Hispanic students can be extremely intolerant of the new Southeast Asians (Peters, 1988; Rumbaut & Ima, 1988; Wehrly & Nelson, 1986). In some cities, name-calling and other taunting has provoked Southeast Asian students to fight back, and Vietnamese students have a high rate of school suspensions caused by self-defense in such situations (Rumbaut & Ima, 1988).

This prejudice against Southeast Asians creates a vicious cycle. When Southeast Asian students feel hostility from native teenagers, they either act out, become apathetic, or turn all the more determined to preserve their cultural identity—any of which, not surprisingly, leads to further nonacceptance (Goldstein, 1985).

The Pace of Assimilation

Peer pressure on immigrant students is even greater than on the American-born. Southeast Asian adolescents quickly take on the outward cultural traits of those around them—at the expense of their own cultural heritage. At home, these new traits often cause friction within families, who rightly want to preserve some of their own traditional heritage.

School counselors can help refugee youth slow the process of assimilation to a rate acceptable to both them and their parents. Teachers can alleviate peer pressure by working with all students to help them understand cultural differences, and by using multicultural teaching materials and methods (Yao, 1985).

Symptoms of Stress

Although school personnel have expressed a need for better clues to stress symptoms among their Southeast Asian students (Wehrly & Nelson, 1986), these adolescents often manifest problems in ways that look American: gang behavior, drugs, suicide, alienation, family conflict, poor achievement in school, the adoption of extreme dress and makeup. In addition, Southeast Asian students can show stress through depression, somatization, withdrawal, and, in the extreme case, psychotic symptoms (Nicassio, LaBarbera, Coburn, & Finley, 1986).

Whatever the outward manifestation, it is important to understand that the underlying causes of refugee students' problems be their particularly stressful experiences both in Asia and in this country. These experiences include:

- *pre-immigration* factors, such as their ethnicity, class status, and general cultural values;
- *migration* factors, such as their time of departure; and their escape, camp, and migration experiences; and
- *post-migration* factors, such as whether they now live with their own family, how different their new environment is from the one they were used to in Southeast Asia, and the reception of the host community (Nidorf, 1985).

Not surprisingly, Southeast Asian adolescents who emigrated with their parents, or are in foster care with other Southeast Asian families, do better in school and are much less depressed than are those adolescents placed with American families or in group homes (Porte & Torney-Purta, 1987). School personnel should also be aware that, while refugee youth may have coped well during their initial post-settlement period, the trauma, hardship, and stress of disruption and resettlement may show up later, after the basic needs of safety, housing, jobs, and language are met (Robinson, 1985).

Parent Involvement

Involving parents in the school can help decrease the tension between the culture of the home and that of the school. Schools can also offer special sessions to acquaint parents with the school system. Unfortunately, many school projects have failed because there were no native language speakers. To be successful, parent involvement efforts must be spearheaded by bilingual personnel. So far, schools have created ties with parents through afternoon and evening ESL and high school equivalency certificate classes, parent-teacher conferences, multilingual newsletters and handbooks, and theatre trips. Because the Hmong and Lao, who have little formal education, are the least likely to be involved with English outside the ESL classroom, special efforts may often be necessary to get these parents involved. Conferences with bilingual teachers are particularly important.

Conclusion

Although Southeast Asian refugee youth may look a great deal like any American adolescent even when they show signs of stress, it is important to remember that their lives have been extremely different, and that the stress of adjustment continues to be great long after their survival needs have been met. Like all teenagers, these refugees are struggling to develop an adult identity, but those who have arrived in the U.S. during adolescence must also work through the trauma of being refugees.

—Carol Ascher

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STOPPING DRUG ABUSE

By Amy Klauke

As surveys show drug abuse to be a national priority concern and Congress initiates strong antidrug legislation, schools are seeking the most effective ways to stem the tide of alcohol and drug use among their students.

Why should educators be concerned about drug abuse by students?

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, one in twenty high school seniors drinks alcohol daily, and 61 percent have tried illegal drugs (Bachman and others 1986). Even more alarming, one in ten high school seniors admits to having tried the addictive and toxic drug cocaine (Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan 1987). As Susan Hooper (1988) points out, the United States ranks "first among all industrialized nations in the number of young people using illicit drugs."

Use of alcohol and drugs by students poses a serious threat to society, to the students themselves, and to the educational process. The relationship between drug use and crime is evident in a Bureau of Justice Statistics report (Beck and others 1987) stating that nearly half of juveniles in correctional facilities committed their offenses while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Drug and alcohol abuse is also linked with dropping out of school, depression, suicide, and violence.

Also of direct concern to educators is the effect of drugs on student learning. According to Hooper, "scientific research has shown that many drugs, even when taken in small doses, can cause permanent damage to the learning centers of the brain—damage which increases with increased drug use."

Responding to the drug crisis, more than half of the states require local school districts to implement comprehensive substance abuse programs (Cashman 1986). Many states have established councils to coordinate community and school prevention and educational efforts. In some states, preservice training in drug and alcohol abuse prevention is a prerequisite for teacher certification.

What are school districts doing to stop drug abuse?

As each district assesses its own particular substance abuse problem, responses range from strict punitive measures to strengthening personal coping skills and careful reworking of structures that may be leading students to drug dependency.

Oregon's Newberg School District bases its Drug and Alcohol Student Assistance Program on the premise that "addiction is a disease that follows a predictable pattern and is treatable" (Leatt 1987). Along with a comprehensive drug education program, Newberg trains an Impact Team composed of school and community members versed in causes, symptoms, and intervention techniques of substance abuse. Teachers who observe behaviors symptomatic of drug use in a student fill out a referral form that can lead to further monitoring of the student's behavior by other faculty members and to an interview arranged with the family. With parental agreement, the student then begins an appropriate rehabilitation program.

Deane Flood and Ellen Morehouse (1986) warn that, "in their quest to help, educators often prevent students from suffering the negative consequences of their substance abuse. As a result, the students have no reason or motivation to change." Westchester County's Student Assistance Program, these authors say, works to diffuse such enabling responses by, for instance, sponsoring chaperoned social events and establishing a firm, publicized policy regarding possession of drugs or alcohol.

Ohio's Forest Hills School District enlists coaches to discuss substance abuse with their teams. These coaches, Norma Wolf (1986) reports, recruit student athletes, especially team captains, who agree to encourage other students to stay clear of drugs and alcohol.

What social issues are involved?

It is possible that the fever and rhetoric of an "antidrug" campaign could deflect attention from the deeper issues of fear, despair, and alienation, Richard Sagor (1987) warns. He advises educators to attend to the conditions that lead to self-destructive activity. Adult responses should be informed, tempered to the occasion, and reflect not accusation but rather concern for the well-being of the student.

There must also be the concession that drug use is not limited to young people, and that, in fact, alcohol abuse presents the most serious drug-related health and social concern in our country. Care should be taken not to engender division among or within students, but to create instead, Sagor recommends, "meaningful, useful, socially productive roles for teenagers in our society."

How can schools plan and implement drug abuse prevention programs?

The lack of significant success in stemming drug use is almost always due, C. Lynn Fox and others (1987) say, "to an inadequate understanding of both a process and the content of a comprehensive planning and implementation model." They suggest identifying a team of interested, committed staff and community members to carry out the following five phases of a prevention and intervention plan:

- Needs Assessment—utilize surveys, interviews, pretesting, and attention to contributory social norms and processes to gain an understanding of root causes, degree, and characteristics of local drug use.
- Planning Process—prioritize specific goals, organize methods, and assign tasks.
- Implementation—educate parents, staff, and students; sponsor drug-free activities; identify and refer substance abusers for treatment; establish peer support and followup systems.
- Evaluation—examine pre- and post-student data and measure program effectiveness.
- Dissemination—inform the local community about the program and request their input.

Among additional strategies for mounting an effective program, Hooper suggests that school leaders carefully evaluate their district's present policies; revise them or develop new ones, as necessary; "involve parents, law enforcement and health officials, drug treatment specialists," and others in shaping those policies; and vigorously enforce the policies. Also, she advises districts to "develop curricula that encourage students to 'say no' to drugs and alcohol."

What are some other factors to consider when planning a drug abuse program?

The promotion of student self-esteem and a positive school atmosphere should permeate any substance abuse program. An emphasis on active learning, higher academic standards, and individualized instruction can help maintain students' focus on their own education.

Dealing with potentially dangerous substances and issues of intrusion and invasion of personal freedom necessitates a thorough and updated knowledge of relevant laws. Firm, consistent policies against drug and alcohol abuse lend credibility and seriousness to assistance programs. It is also important to involve students in peer support groups and student-organized, drug-free social activities.

The best plans are comprehensive, long-term, and integrated into overall school curricula and policy. They respond to the diverse needs and particular characteristics of each school district and each student. And, as Sagor reminds, we must restructure our institutions "to focus on youth's legitimate need for self-esteem and usefulness . . . we must make peace with our children."

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ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education The George Washington University One Dupont Circle, Suite 630 Washington, DC 20036

Student Goals for College and Courses: A Missing Link in Assessing and Improving Academic Achievement

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As the United States debates what it expects of college graduates and how to measure the achievement of these expectations, the goals of students frequently are overlooked. During discussions about higher education quality, activities such as promoting active involvement in learning, stating clear expectations, and assessing educational results have taken on increased importance for colleges and universities attempting to improve their programs. Yet in each of these activities, understanding students' educational goals is important to ensure success. Helping students take active responsibility for their education, for example, may depend on how well educators link the classroom goals they set for their students with the goals that students hold for themselves. Communicating clear expectations for students depends, in part, on understanding discrepancies between expectations instructors establish and those students accept as consistent with their own goals. In addition, accurate assessment of student outcomes fostered by the college experience should take into account students' educational goals as well as their academic preparation.

What Are Goals?

Goals are what individuals hope to achieve and accomplish. Such intentions motivate and direct human behavior. Thus, educational outcomes such as academic satisfaction, use of appropriate learning strategies, effort exerted in course work, and ultimately, academic achievement, are related to goals. Goals are not fixed; they change as individuals develop different self-views and acquire new methods of regulating their behavior. In fact, helping students to revise their goals and to improve the extent to which they control their behavior are valid educational goals.

What Information About Students' Goals Do Colleges Typically Collect?

Currently, most colleges collect information about the broad goals students hold for attending college as they enter. This information is used for administrative planning or for developing strategies to recruit and retain students. Some institutions also collect perceptions from graduating seniors and alumni about the extent to which they achieved their academic, personal, social, and vocational goals in college. Apparently, few institutions make the effort to measure how student goals change from entrance to graduation or as a result of specific programs of study.

In attempting to examine goals more systematically, scholars of higher education have developed a number of typologies based on observed student subcultures or broad intellectual orientations (for example, Katchadourian and Boli 1985). Researchers related these typologies to student characteristics believed to be relatively stable, such as learning styles and vocational orientations, and used them to increase understanding of problems such as student attrition. Typologies are criticized, however, for perpetuating stereotypes of students.

Since goals are what students hope to accomplish, and outcomes represent what actually is achieved, current trends toward measurement of educational outcomes (assessment) foster attempts to connect goals and outcomes at the course and program level. A few colleges, active in developing student assessment programs, also are collecting and using information about specific student goals for classroom work. Increasingly, educators and researchers recognize that the impact of college might be measured more effectively at the program or course level, close to the student's everyday educational environment. As yet, however, systematic attempts to include student goals in assessment and instructional improvement activities are limited.

What Are the Characteristics of a Course-Specific Student Goals Inventory?

Based on their prior preparation and self-views, students have broad goals for attending college, narrower goals for achievement in particular courses, and even more specific goals as they approach each learning task. The goals students bring to college courses are interrelated in time with the broader college goals that precede them and the narrower, specific learning task goals that help to achieve them. Ideally, then, to provide the broadest possible understanding of student goals, an inventory for classroom use would include items concerning broad goals, expectancies, and self-concept, as well as goals specific to the type of courses.

Many possible frameworks could guide development of such an inventory. For example, a framework could emphasize a single goal area, for example, goals related to intellectual growth, social and personal growth, or vocational growth. An appropriate inventory could be based, as well, on theories of intellectual development such as those established by Kolb, Perry or Bloom. New developments in social science can help to guide development of a comprehensive course-specific students goals inventory capable of illuminating the multidimensional goal patterns students bring to college and classroom.

A comprehensive model of student goals promises considerably more explanatory power than previous simpler goal models, and presents an extensive complex set of possibilities for research and classroom improvement.

How Can Instructors Use Course-Specific Goal Information?

Faculty can use students' course-level goals to improve teaching. Evidence gathered from faculty indicates that many instructors are interested in student goals, and many are willing to experiment with ways to systematically collect and use goal information (Stark, Lowther, Ryan, Bomotti, Genthon, Martens, and Haven 1988).

At the simplest and most descriptive level, goal information can help an instructor understand the diversity and intensity of student effort in a particular class. In a more elaborate way, through the process now frequently referred to as "classroom research," instructors can use goal information to discern how their goals for a particular class relate to those of their students. This can help them design classes that employ teaching approaches appropriate for their students' levels of interest and expectation. At still a more complex level, collecting and analyzing student goals can enhance formal assessment processes. Since course-level goals are measured with regard to a specific academic discipline or classroom setting, using them in the assessment process may involve statistically adjusting outcome expectations in that setting to account for goals of entering students. Assessment also may include attempts to foster and document goal changes among students.

A course-level goal inventory, the Student Goals Exploration, is current being field tested at the National Center for Research to Improve Postsecondary Teaching and Learning (NCRIPTAL). This inventory will be available soon for use by classroom teachers and researchers.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Suicide and Sudden Loss: Crisis Management in the Schools

The School-As-Community

Suicide or sudden loss among student populations has become a major concern for school counselors, teachers, parents and helping professionals. Within the context of the school-as-community, the self-destructive potential of young people is a major contemporary crisis. Classmates, parents, teachers, and relatives experience both the direct implications of a student's death and the residual long-term effects of a significant loss. The devastating feelings of loss at a young age can be a traumatic experience for schools (Franson & Hunter, 1988). Inherently, personal loss or threat of loss also increases a person's suicide risk. Precipitating stressors include depression; loss of a significant relationship; impulsivity; stress; substance abuse; negative life events; physical, sexual or emotional abuse; isolation; alienation; or a mystical concept of death (Ray & Johnson, 1983; Phi Delta Kappan, 1988).

Hawton (1986) and Perrone (1987) found that peers of adolescents who attempted suicide are vulnerable because suicide is higher:

- among persons with unstable social relationships;
- when a population is self-contained (as in school-as-community and school-as-institution);
- when imitative behavior is common;
- when the element of bravado exists; and
- when the act is sure to be noticed.

Balk (1983) further identified acute emotional responses of students after the death of a peer. He revealed that while peer support and chances to talk with friends about the death at such a time of loss were important aids in coping with death, many peers feel uncomfortable talking about death. They frequently avoid the survivors to decrease their discomfort of not knowing what to say or how to say it. Balk maintained that young people sometimes hide their feelings of grief because such feelings often are not considered acceptable in public, and as a result, adolescents are often confused about the source of their recurring grief reactions.

Behavior Manifestations of Loss

The reactions of survivors who have experienced a suicide or sudden loss are likely to be complex, but typically include some or all of the following behavioral characteristics: denial, anger, blaming, shame, guilt, fear, intellectualization, or hostility.

Stanford (1978) and Hunt (1987) further suggested the need for direct intervention in schools with survivors. Shneidman (1972) noted that when a death occurs, particularly of an unexpected nature, there is no pattern of behavior to draw upon, and confusion results. Teachers also need help in understanding and handling young people's normal, yet often inappropriate, reactions to death. Young people often take clues as to how to react from the adults around them more than from the event itself. A paramount need is for counselors, educators and other support personnel to process the emotional needs of survivors. Intervention to enhance coping skills could ultimately prevent future suicides, or related self-destructive behavior.

Managing the First 48 Hours

When a young person commits suicide, or is the survivor of any kind of tragic death, the school counselor is confronted immediately with a number of serious problems:

- Verifying what happened,
- Containing the information,
- Protecting the privacy of the family,
- Helping students cope with the death,
- Communicating beyond the school,
- Seeking resources in the community,
- Dealing with parents, and
- Minimizing the possibility that other students may imitate the behavior and take their own lives.

The first 48 hours following a student's suicide or tragic death are crucial. The specific things for a counselor and his or her staff to do during the first 48 hours are listed below:

- Verify the death. Meet or call the family; share with family what school and staff plans to do; protect the family's right to privacy, but also share the critical survivor needs of students and staff.
- Convene School Crisis Management Team.
- Meet with faculty to provide accurate information and to implement school's crisis management plan.
- Designate a person to serve as a case manager.
- Call on city-wide crisis management teams or support services if needed.
- Identify staff member(s) who will follow the deceased student's class schedule to meet with teachers and classmates and to work the hallways following the crisis.
- Make counselors and/or support staff available to students.
- Identify students about whom faculty and staff are concerned.
- Provide rooms for students to meet in small groups.

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Critical Questions to Consider After a Crisis Due to Suicide or Sudden Death

- How and when should the staff be informed?
- Is there a clearly defined phone tree in place?
- How and when should the students be informed?
- What specific information will be shared about the tragedy with the teachers and staff?
- How will the school protect the family's privacy?
- Who is the spokesperson for the school and what information will be released to the media?
- What will staff members be told to say if contacted by the media?
- How should the personal possessions of the student be handled?
- If feeder schools are affected by the crisis, how should they be included in the overall postvention efforts?
- Will you have a "care center" for those students who are upset?
- Where will the "care center" be located?
- Who will supervise the "care center"?
- How will students be identified to come to the "care center"?
- How many days will the "care center" be in existence?
- What available staff will you utilize city-wide?
- How will teachers, who are emotionally upset, be assisted?

Tasks of Mourning and Grief Counseling

Accepting the reality of the loss and confronting the fact that the person is dead are two of the most important initial tasks of mourning. The early denial and avoidance is quickly replaced by the realization of the loss and it is necessary to feel the pain of the loss and work through the grief process.

The grief process includes adjusting to an environment in which the deceased is missing. Survivors must face the loss of the many roles the deceased person filled in their life (e.g., classmate, team member, close friend.). Students need to recognize that symptoms such as startle reactions, restlessness, agitation, sleeplessness, depression and anxiety are typical intense reactions to a traumatic experience such as death. Also essential is coming to terms with the anger one often feels toward (1) the person who has died, (2) oneself, and (3) others. A final task of mourning is to redirect the belief that one should have somehow prevented the death.

Special Treatment Issues With Adolescents

- Allow regression and dependency.
- Realize their lack of life experience in handling trauma.
- Allow expression of feelings such as sorrow, hostility, and guilt.
- Encourage discussion.
- Allow for fluctuations in maturity level.
- Watch for emergence of unfinished business or unresolved conflicts of the past.
- Answer questions and provide factual information.
- Correct distortions.
- Avoid power struggles with adolescents.
- Focus on strengths and constructive adaptive behaviors.
- Address conscious as well as unconscious guilt.
- Identify and help resolve adolescents' sense of powerlessness.

Conclusion

Young people continue to communicate their need for help in understanding their feelings of confusion, loss, alienation, loneliness, depression, anger, sadness, and guilt. Their ability to develop coping strategies for their uncomfortable but normal feelings and their ability to adjust to loss and maintain control over everyday life experiences, will ultimately be dependent on the assistance they obtain and the resources provided to them by the school-as-community. Counselors, administrators and other support personnel can provide the curative environment that fosters prevention and intervention with at-risk students. Collective efforts to provide structured programs and secure environments to "work through" significant losses are necessary to arrest the present cycle of self-destructive behavior of contemporary youth.

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SUPPORTING AND FACILITATING SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

Perhaps because the concept is so central to what adult education is all about (Mezirow 1985), self-directed learning has been one of the field's high-interest topics for more than a decade. Researchers, theorists, and practitioners have all asked the questions: What is self-directed learning? Who is engaged in it? What are the proper roles for educators and institutions wanting to provide it?

What Is Self-Directed Learning?

An estimated 70 percent of adult learning is self-directed learning (Cross 1981). Self-directed learning has been described as "a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others," to diagnose their learning needs, formulate learning goals, identify resources for learning, select and implement learning strategies, and evaluate learning outcomes (Knowles 1975).

Mocker and Spear (1982) included self-directed learning in a descriptive model of lifelong learning based entirely on the locus of control for decision making about the objectives and means of learning. The model is a two-by-two matrix of learner and institution; the self-directed learning situation occurs when learners--not the institution--control both the learning objectives and the means of learning. The following situations occupy the other cells of the matrix: (1) formal learning, in which institutions, not learners, control objectives and the means of learning; (2) nonformal learning, in which learners control the objectives and institutions control the means; and (3) informal learning, in which institutions control the objectives but learners control the means of learning.

Thus, whether or not learning is self-directed depends not on the subject matter to be learned or on the instructional methods used. Instead, self-directedness depends on who is in charge--who decides what should be learned, who should learn it, what methods and resources should be used, and how the success of the effort should be measured. To the extent the learner makes those decisions, the learning is generally considered to be self-directed.

Perhaps only **degrees** of self-directedness are actually possible, given the frequent necessity of maintaining institutional standards and, as Mezirow (1985) points out, the impossibility of freely choosing among objectives unless all possible objectives are known. Some writers have pointed out that Mocker and Spear's model could be viewed as a continuum rather than as a matrix.

Some self-directed learning takes place in comparative isolation in secluded libraries. Other self-directed learners engage in more interpersonal communication (with experts and peers, for instance) than is typically available in conventional classroom education.

The resources available to self-directed learners include printed and audiovisual materials; experts interviewed by letter, telephone, or in person; cultural institutions such as museums, zoos, and arboretums; and associations of all types.

Who Is Engaged in Self-Directed Learning?

About 90 percent of all adults conduct at least one self-directed learning project per year. Typical learners engage in five, spending an average of 100 hours on each project (Tough 1978). (It is important to bear in mind that most of the research that has been conducted on self-directed learning has investigated the activities of middle-class adults.)

Many self-directed learners are attempting to gain new skills, knowledge, and attitudes to improve their work performance. Others conduct their self-directed learning to improve family life and health, enjoy the arts and physical recreation, participate in a hobby, or simply increase their intellectual capital.

Adult educators have found that some adults are incapable of engaging in self-directed learning because they lack independence, confidence, or resources. Not all adults prefer the self-directed option, and even the adults who practice self-directed learning also engage in more formal educational experiences such as teacher-directed courses (Brookfield 1985).

What Are the Proper Roles for Educators and Institutions?

The following list summarizes points made by several writers (Ash 1985; Bauer 1985; Brockett and Hiemstra 1985; Brookfield 1985; Cross 1978; Hiemstra 1982, 1985; and Reisser 1973) regarding how adult educators can best facilitate self-directed learning:

- o Help the learner identify the starting point for a learning project and discern relevant modes of examination and reporting.
- o Encourage adult learners to view knowledge and truth as contextual, to see value frameworks as cultural constructs, and to appreciate that they can act on their world individually or collectively to transform it.
- o Create a partnership with the learner by negotiating a learning contract for goals, strategies, and evaluation criteria.
- o Be a manager of the learning experience rather than an information provider.
- o Help learners acquire the needs assessment techniques necessary to discover what objectives they should set.
- o Encourage the setting of objectives that can be met in several ways and offer a variety of options for evidence of successful performance.
- o Provide examples of previously acceptable work.
- o Make sure that learners are aware of the objectives, learning strategies, resources, and evaluation criteria once they are decided upon.

- Teach inquiry skills, decision making, personal development, and self-evaluation of work.
- Act as advocates for educationally underserved populations to facilitate their access to resources.
- Help match resources to the needs of learners.
- Help learners locate resources.
- Help learners develop positive attitudes and feelings of independence relative to learning.
- Recognize learner personality types and learning styles.
- Use techniques such as field experience and problem solving that take advantage of adults' rich experience base.
- Develop high-quality learning guides, including programmed learning kits.
- Encourage critical thinking skills by incorporating such activities as seminars.
- Create an atmosphere of openness and trust to promote better performance.
- Help protect learners against manipulation by promoting a code of ethics.
- Behave ethically, which includes not recommending a self-directed learning approach if it is not congruent with the learners' needs.

For educational institutions and employers engaged in providing self-directed learning experiences, Hiemstra (1982, 1985) and Brockett and Hiemstra (1985) recommend the following:

- Have the faculty meet regularly with panels of experts who can suggest curricula and evaluation criteria.
- Conduct research on trends and learners' interests.
- Obtain the necessary tools to assess learners' current performance and to evaluate their expected performance.
- Provide opportunities for self-directed learners to reflect on what they are learning.
- Recognize and reward learners when they have met their learning objectives.
- Promote learning networks, study circles, and learning exchanges.
- Provide staff training on self-directed learning and broaden the opportunities for its implementation.

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TEACHER, PRINCIPAL, AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE EFFECTIVE SCHOOL

Since the inception of the effective schools movement more than a decade ago, researchers and practitioners have been working to construct a model of school effectiveness. Today, several characteristics—mainly those concerning the roles and conduct of teachers and principals—have emerged as the best, although not perfect, answers to the question of what makes an effective school. Meanwhile, a newer, less-developed segment of the effective schools research is addressing parent involvement and its effect on students' learning experiences.

Teachers

Good and extensive teacher-student interaction and classroom dynamics are crucial to effective learning. The research clearly indicates these three essential characteristics of effective teachers:

High Expectations: Effective teachers must believe that each student has the capability to succeed academically, and that they, their teachers, are the ones who will help make the difference in students' levels of achievement (Brophy, 1979). High expectations can be demonstrated in several ways. For instance, teachers can move assuredly through the required curriculum at a brisk pace, covering necessary material and always demanding that students work up to their capacity. Teachers should also offer frequent praise and encouragement, emphasizing student's capabilities instead of their negative performances; encourage them to talk; and use their ideas in class.

Time-on-Task: Effective teachers adopt efficient and thorough techniques for transferring knowledge and spend all or most of their class time "on task," i.e., direct teaching. Time-on-task is the percentage of the time within a school day used by students actively engaged in learning, and this should be as high as possible (Mann and Inman, 1984, p. 258). Teachers who fill the school day with learning activities that students are able to master will successfully cover more material. Beginning class on time and keeping the discussion, lecture, or seatwork moving continuously are just some of the methods for raising the percentage of time-on-task.

Mastery Learning: A third but less universally accepted concept of effective teaching involves teaching basic skills through the mastery learning technique (Edmonds, 1979). As opposed to conventional teaching in which students are taught and tested on material once, mastery learning uses tests as a form of continuous feedback to teachers, enabling them to determine the areas where students need corrective procedures, more instruction, and subsequent tests.

Thus, material will be taught until it is mastered, and students will not be passed through the system until they have proven their comprehension of the required curriculum. Except for one-on-one tutoring—a luxury few schools can afford—mastery learning has been proven the most effective technique in developing students' attitudes toward learning.

Yet, the mastery learning practice has remained one of the most controversial of the established effective schools characteristics; a contingent of experts find it short-sighted and harmful in the long-run. Studies have shown that when a great deal of emphasis is placed on tests, teachers will either teach to the test or teach testing (Stedman, 1985). Further, teachers may begin to emphasize only the basic skills found on the standardized tests, giving less attention to other educational goals—acquiring higher-level thinking skills, learning to make decisions, developing self esteem, etc. (Stedman, 1985).

Principals

A principal, as the instructional and managerial leader of the school, is considered essential to the creation and maintenance of an effective school atmosphere. Here are a few effective principal characteristics:

High Expectations: For many of the same reasons that teacher expectations are paramount to student performance, a principal's belief in students' ability is also crucial. Further, the principal can espouse high expectations throughout the school and help teachers appreciate their potential impact on the performance of many students.

Effective principals recruit outstanding teachers who want to assist in helping achieve the goals of the school, demand more from them, and hold them accountable for the progress of their students. Because effective principals believe that all students can learn, they will not allow students to be labeled unteachable.

Strong Instructional Leadership: Edmonds (1979) found that effective schools have a clear instructional focus and a clearly stated mission that embraces instruction, teaching, and learning. These are derived from principals knowledgeable about effective instruction and involved in curriculum development and teacher supervision. Principals should also monitor and evaluate teachers' performance on an on-going basis by sitting in on classes.

Creating a Positive School Climate: A principal can also make a school more effective by developing and maintaining an orderly school atmosphere, and ensuring that creating order doesn't displace academic achievement as most important (Clark, Lotto, & Astuto, 1984), or limit time-on-task (Rosenholtz, 1985). Principals can further buffer teachers by providing adequate materials, and not overburdening them with nonacademic activities such as paperwork, lunchroom monitoring, and watching children in the playground.

Another technique to help principals create a positive school environment is school-based planning, i.e., a joint decision making process. By emphasizing collaboration in making changes within the school so everyone will understand the reasons behind decisions, and encouraging feedback from teachers as well as other staff members—cafeteria workers, custodians, etc., a principal will generate a feeling of joint ownership in the school. Students, detecting this sense of common purpose among the adults in the building, will want to become a part of it also.

Parents

The body of effective schools research that examines parent involvement—helping children before they arrive and after they leave school—is the newest and least well-defined. Education researchers who have studied parent involvement agree that, especially in low-income situations, the responsibility of developing a strong school-home bond rests upon the principal and teachers (Epstein, 1987). While not "letting the school off the hook," it emphasizes the importance of the parental role.

Bloom (1984, p. 10-11) points to several environment factors that play a leading role in students' achievement or failure:

- work habits and daily schedule of the family;
- available parental guidance, support, and assistance for a child's school- and homework;
- intellectual stimulation;
- langauge development; and
- parents' academic aspirations and expectations for their children.

Of these, parental expectation is the most crucial and the easiest to adjust (Mann, 1984). As with the teacher and principal expectation research, the most recent effective schools findings emphasize the necessity of parental encouragement and support throughout a child's school years. The research also suggests that the best way to improve home support for learning begins with a dialogue between the school and the home (Bloom, 1984).

Many educators advocate home visits by teachers and daily open school visitation for parents. Also essential is communication through frequent phone calls, progress reports, and newsletters to inform parents of students' obligations. Bringing parents into the schools as volunteers, or providing school-based programs for parent education, are highly recommended methods of helping parents help their children.

In too many instances schools do not assist parents in becoming involved in their children's education, and may even consider them part of the problem of low student achievement. But an effective school of the late 1980s and 1990s needs to communicate to parents what they are expected to do to support their child's efforts, and to identify a variety of ways in which parents can reinforce the school program.

Application of Techniques

Some education researchers warn against the premature application of the effective schools techniques into schools whose populations differ from those where the techniques were proven to be effective. For example, findings indicate that schools serving students of economically deprived backgrounds are forced to focus on very limited set of learning objectives in order to achieve a high level instructional effectiveness (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). In such a situation, the term "mastery learning" might mean mastering small quantities of basic information and missing broad concepts of knowledge.

The effective schools techniques may not be transferable from the elementary schools, where most of it was formulated and tested, to the junior and senior high schools. Basic structural differences (a more diverse curriculum and less time spent with one teacher in the higher grades) coupled with the age difference (older children are less easily influenced and more set in their ways of thinking and attitudes toward school) may prevent the same techniques from working equally well in both environments (Rosenholtz, 1985).

Hence, an all-inclusive answer to the question of what makes an effective school simply does not exist. The literature, however, identifies a useful list of characteristics that, when tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of each school, will, at the very least, help educators and students create an effective school.

—Amy Stuart Wells

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ERIC DIGEST

MIGRANT EDUCATION

EDO-RC-88-12

Teaching the Abused Migrant Child: What's a Teacher to Do?

Research conducted by ESCAPE (Eastern Stream Child Abuse Prevention and Education) from 1982-85 clearly identified migrant children as a population at a high risk of being maltreated. It is imperative, therefore, that migrant teachers understand the dynamics of maltreatment and what they as individuals can do to prevent it.

What are the causes of child abuse in migrant families?

The life of migrant families is a stressful one--characterized by uncertain employment conditions, geographic and social isolation, poor living conditions, poverty, and mobility. The frequent moves often prevent families from establishing community ties, availing themselves of support services that might lessen stress, and building personal relationships that could alleviate the social isolation. The stresses of poverty have a psychological effect on the family as members struggle to provide food, shelter, clothing, medical care, and appropriate child care. All too frequently the end result of these temptestuous forces on the family is maltreatment.

What are the migrant teachers' roles in dealing with abuse?

Child abuse is a complex problem and its prevention requires action on many fronts. School personnel do spend many hours a day with children and can thus be leaders in prevention. There are many roles for the teacher to play in coping with child abuse in the classroom. None of these roles is unfamiliar to the teacher, especially to the migrant educator who traditionally teaches the whole child and his/her family.

- **Observer:** Be aware of the physical signs of abuse and neglect: maltreatment, behavioral changes, and changes in relationships with peers. Sometimes it is difficult to determine what is different or out of place. Just rememember--if it doesn't seem right, it usually isn't.

- **Listener:** Listen to what children are saying. They may speak directly to you or they may tell a friend that there is something wrong in their lives. They may also speak through play, their writing, or their reaction to books they have read.

- **Home Visitor:** Working closely with the family has always been an integral part of migrant education. Knowledge of the child's home environment is invaluable in assessing the child's educational needs. Additionally, this understanding will help you put what you observe and hear in the proper persepctive. Changes in the home may easily explain changes in the child's behavior. Should an abusive or neglectful situation be indicated, the background you have on the family can be useful in determining supportive services, avenues of communication, and possible causes.

- **Reporter:** Your observations of the child and/or the home environment may lead you to suspect child maltreatment. In most states, teachers and other school personnel are mandated reporters. If so, you should follow the policy of your school district and the procedures of your state in reporting your suspicions. If you are not familiar with your state law, obtain a copy and read it without delay. Remember that by reporting you are taking the first step in rebuilding a family and ending a child's suffering.

Often the migrant family will move before an investigation can be completed or services provided. This is indeed frustrating but you can keep attention focused on the child's needs by recording the symptoms you observed on the child's Migrant Student Record Transfer System form. States have different policies for recording this information. Consult your MSRTS office for the appropriate procedures to follow. Some state Child Protective Services agencies have interstate compacts which allow forwarding of maltreatment case information to the state to which the child has moved. Personnel in the new state will continue investigating and, if possible, continue any services that have been accepted by the family. Contact your Social Service Agency for further information.

Anyone, including an abused child, can report a case of maltreatment by calling the free 24-hour number found in the white pages of the phone book. Some states have a toll free hot line.

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- **Advocate:** The child protective system will provide services for the family if maltreatment is indicated. Often the services given to the child victim are limited and other resources must be located. The educational system has a number of resources which help the child, including counseling and remediation. Consider referring the child to the Committee on Special Education. Maltreated children are children with special needs.

If a child's needs exceed the school's resources, perhaps there are appropriate community services available. Try to build a network of support agencies and personnel so that the responsibility can be shared.

- **Teacher:** There is a great need to teach all children the dynamics of child maltreatment. Ensuring their safety is a prime concern. However, children are being bombarded with much information and educators must be sure that youngsters understand what this information means. Some children may be unnecessarily alarmed and others may be fearful to disclose maltreatment.

How should a teacher deal with disclosure?

Children are learning about child abuse and neglect from many sources: television programs, news stories, and school programs. An important message is getting through: "If it happens to you, tell someone! Don't keep it a secret."

Some day a child may come to you and disclose that s/he has been or is presently being maltreated. Perhaps it will happen because of material you present in the classroom, or perhaps it will simply be an expression of the trust that the child has in you. Sharing this secret is a sign that you are viewed as very special to this child and it is crucial that you react in a way that will provide comfort to the child and will result in assistance to the child and family. While your initial reaction may be one of rage, revulsion, even physical illness, you must convey a sense of comfort and security to the child. The manner of your reaction is of crucial importance to the child's self-esteem and can bolster his/her courage to face the aftermath of this revelation.

Listening to a child's disclosure is never easy, but if you understand how to cope with the information in a manner which will bring about a significant positive change in this child's life, it may be a bit easier. Outlined below are some suggestions for how to proceed when a child discloses to you. Every situation is different, and you should always take into consideration your knowledge of this particular child. And remember, you needn't deal with this alone. You can always find someone to help you deal with your own reactions to this very emotional situation.

Do this:

- **Be Calm.** Try to control your own feelings and listen carefully to what the child is saying. Showing your rage or discomfort may make the child feel that s/he has done something wrong.

- **Find a quiet, private place to talk.** Keep in mind that the student may be hurt, in pain, fearful, or apprehensive. S/he should be made as comfortable as possible. If you are uncomfortable discussing this subject, help to arrange for the student to talk with someone else, s/he knows and trusts. Follow-up to make sure that someone is providing the help that is needed.

- **Believe the child.** Victims rarely lie, especially about child abuse. The child may have tried to tell others who wouldn't listen and now is in special need of your trust. Convey to the student that you believe him/her and will try to help. If you doubt the child, s/he may stop talking about the problem.

- **Stress that it is not the child's fault.** Children often believe that they are to blame for the maltreatment.Frequently, the perpetrator tells them that they are at fault and that it wouldn't have happened if they had behaved differently. Reassure the child that s/he is not at fault; however, be careful not to make negative statements about parents or other perpetrators. Maltreated children have ambivalent feelings about abusive parents or relatives and may even feel protective.

- **Respect the child's privacy.** Let the student know that you will respect his/her confidence (that is, you won't tell other teachers or students about the abuse). Explain that you are required to report the abuse to the proper authorities.

- **Be supportive.** Assure the child that s/he is doing the right thing by disclosing this information. A child whodivulges such painful facts is putting him/herself at great risk. Word your questions in a nonjudgmental, open-ended way. Let the student tell you the story in whatever manner is most comfortable. S/he has given away what little control s/he has of this situation and entrusted you to help. Always be accepting of what the child tells you and how s/he tells it.

- **Be truthful.** These children need to learn to trust adults again. Never make promises that you cannot keep. Tell the child that you are required to tell the authorities whose job it is to protect children and help their parents. Explain as much as you know about what action will be taken and what is likely to happen. Assure the student of your support and assistance throughout the process, and follow through on the assurance.

- **Make a report immediately.** Don't wait until the end of the day or the week to report the case. It is imperative that you notify the proper authorities immediately for the sake of the child and to fulfill your legal responsibilities.

- **Be an advocate.** The child will continue to need your support even after a report has been made and the child protection authorities are handling the case. If the child remains in the school do your best to quell rumors and gossip. Provide a shoulder for the child to lean on. Listen to what the child has to say. You may need to advocate for school or community sponsored programs such as counseling, remediation, or support groups so that the child receives professional help.

Don't do this:

- **Allow** the student to feel "in trouble" or "at fault" for the abuse.

- **Criticize** the student's choice of words or language.

- **Try** to be an investigator or press for answers that the student is not comfortable providing.

- **Try** to be a therapist. You can be a sympathetic listener and a great support to the child, but recognize your limitations in dealing with this complex, emotionally-charged situation.

- **Display** shock, anger, digust, or disapproval of the parents, the student, or the situation. You may feel these things, but it is unlikely to be helpful to the student to share these feelings with him/her. Most children, even abused children, love their parents and feel strong loyalty to them.

- **Tell** the student what s/he is feeling. Talk with the student about how "some people" might feel in a given situation. This leaves him/her free to agree or to express different feelings. Without question, listening to a child describe maltreatment can be a painful and difficult experience. Seek the support and expertise of school and community resources to help you deal with the needs of the child and with your own anguish.

What is a teacher to do?

As a teacher you are entrusted with a real treasure--a child's spirit. It can grow and flourish or it can be crushed. For the abused child, the school may be the only avenue of escape, a place where s/he can feel safe. Your classroom can support the child's needs if you:

- **Promote** an accepting environment in your classroom.

- **Be** warm and loving.

- **Create** an individualized program for the maltreated child.

- **Give** the maltreated child additional attention wherever possible.

- **Create** classroom activities that focus on the issue of child abuse.

Can you make a difference?

You became a teacher because you genuinely enjoy children and want to be a positive force in their lives. By fulfilling the roles described above, you have the opportunity to make a **significant difference** in the lives of children. You could be the person to give them the information that prevents an incident of maltreatment or which encourages them to tell someone about it and stop the pain.

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

Educating others is always a learning process for the teacher as well. Listed below are some resources to prepare you to deal with the topic of child abuse in your classroom.

1. Behanan, N. & Koblinsky, S. CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE: THE EDUCATORS ROLE IN PREVENTION, DETECTION AND INTERVENTION. Young Children, 1984.

2. Broadhurst, Diane. EDUCATORS, SCHOOLS AND CHILD ABUSE. Chicago: National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, 1986.

3. CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT: WHAT THE EDUCATOR SEES. (20 minute film strip and audiocassette.) Order from: National Archive Trust Fund (NAC) National Audio-Visual Center, Attention: Order Section-PQ, Washington, D.C. $15.

4. Dorman, R. (Ed.) PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE IN THE HARVEST: A HANDBOOK FOR MIGRANT EDUCATORS. Ithaca, N.Y.: ESCAPE, Family Life Development Center, Cornell University, 1985. ED 265 982.

5. Hittleman, Margo. WHAT'S A KID TO DO ABOUT CHILD ABUSE? Ithaca, N.Y.: Family Life Development Center, Cornell University.

6. I STILL CAN'T SAY IT. (24 minute documentary showing a multifaceted prevention program created by a local school district.) Order from: Media Services Distribution Center, 7 Research Park, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. Available on 3/4", 1/2", and Beta Video formats. Cost: $14.00/Rental $70/Purchase 1/2" Video Cassette $100/Purchase 3/4" or Beta.

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TEENAGE PREGNANCY AND DRUG ABUSE: SOURCES OF PROBLEM BEHAVIORS

Introduction

Many at-risk children manifest behaviors that are both a cause and result of their lack of success in school, and possible subsequent dropping out. Two such behavior patterns that can sabotage the future of students are discussed below.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

It is important to note that "use" and "abuse" of drugs and alcohol cannot always be viewed as synonymous (Donovan & Jessor, 1985). Use may precede, but may not necessarily lead to, abuse. Determining quantity or even frequency of use alone cannot adequately measure this distinction. More useful criteria may include age of onset, physiological responses, levels of dependence, attitudes about substance use, and its effects on other areas of functioning (Newcomb & Bentler, 1989). Substance use and abuse may have different etiologies and may require different prevention strategies (Hawkins, Lishner, Catalano, & Howard, 1986). Further, they often occur along with other problem behaviors that should also be targeted for attention.

Some predictors of drug and alcohol experimentation, use, and abuse are examined below.

Family Factors. Parental drug use is correlated with initiation of use of many substances as is parental use of alcohol and other legal drugs. The role of environmental and genetic influences on substance use is difficult to assess, although it is probable that genetic factors contribute more to abuse than to use of drugs (Newcomb & Bentler, 1989). Family risk factors include parental absence, inconsistent discipline, hypocritical morality, poor communication, parental conflicts, and family breakup. However, Newcomb & Bentler (1988) found that family disruption per se may not directly lead to drug use; rather, family problems may lead to disenchantment with traditional values and the development of deviant attitudes, which may in turn lay the foundation for substance use.

Early Antisocial Behavior. Jessor and Jessor (1978) explained drug use as one outcome of "proneness to problem behavior" and as part of a larger syndrome of deviance in which a wide range of "problem behavior" shared common precipitants.

School Factors. A range of school problems—reflected in failure, poor performance, truancy, placement in a special class, early dropping out, and a lack of commitment to education—have been viewed as common antecedents to initiation, use, and abuse of drugs (Jessor & Jessor, 1978).

However, school problems themselves may not lead to drug use; rather, social factors which lead to poor school performance may be linked to drug involvement.

Peer Factors. Association with drug-using peers is perhaps the most strongly supported predictor of adolescent substance use (Hawkins et al., 1986). Newcomb & Bentler (1989) suggest that modeling drug use, providing substances, and encouraging use are the salient components of peer influence. Other researchers have suggested that the influence of parents and peers is varied and situational.

Attitudes, Beliefs, and Personality Traits. Attitudes, beliefs, and personality traits most closely linked with substance use include attenuated attachment to parents, lack of commitment to education, low religiosity, and alienation from dominant societal norms and values (Hawkins et al., 1986).

Substance Use as a Response to Stress. Newcomb & Harlow (1986) studied substance abuse in adolescents as a response to a perceived loss of control, a sense of meaninglessness, and a lack of direction in life. Teenagers may use drugs as a means of temporarily alleviating discomfort connected to life events which they perceive as being out of their control, and can be seen as contributing significantly to an understanding of the higher incidence of drug use among low SES teenagers and those from disrupted families (Newcomb & Bentler, 1989).

Teenage Pregnancy

Teen pregnancy has become a national epidemic, in part because more and more teenagers who give birth decide to keep and raise their children. There is a great cost to individuals, families, and society when children have children of their own.

In the United States today about 12 million teenagers are sexually active. The average age of initiating sexual activity is 16 years (Black and DeBlassie, 1985), although in some cities, such as New York, the average age of first intercourse is 11.6 years for black youth, 14.5 for white youth and 12.8 for Hispanic youths (Finkel & Finkel, 1983).

In actual numbers, more white than minority teenagers become pregnant, but disadvantaged minority youth account for a disproportionate number of teen pregnancies and births in the United States. While 27 percent of the teenage population is composed of minorities, they account for 40 percent of adolescent pregnancies and births (Edelman, 1988). Disadvantaged youth are three to four times more likely to give birth out of wedlock than are more advantaged teens (Robinson, 1988).

Expectations for the Future. Teenagers who see options in their future are more likely to delay pregnancy and childbirth than those who lack hope.

Poor Academic Achievement. There is a strong association between poor school achievement and pregnancy, and poor academic ability may influence the onset of sexual activity and early parenthood (Children's Defense Fund, 1986). A study conducted by Northeastern University revealed that females 16 years of age or older with poor basic skills are 2.5 times more likely to be mothers than their peers with average basic skills. Males with poor academic skills who were 16 years and older were three times more likely to be fathers than their peers with average academic skills. High educational aspirations, better than average grades, internal locus of control, and high SES are positively related to contraceptive use.

Ignorance About Reproduction. Misunderstandings, false assumptions, and ignorance surrounding reproduction play a large role in teen pregnancy. The belief that pregnancy can't result from the initial act of intercourse is particularly widespread.

Family Influences. Teen pregnancy is associated with low parent education (Shah, Zelnik, & Katner, 1975). Girls who get pregnant often have mothers who gave birth in their teens. Parents of teen mothers and fathers are often considered by their teens to have "permissive attitudes" regarding premarital sex and pregnancy (Robinson, 1988). There are also cultural differences in the value placed on having children. Thompson (1980) found that among 300 adolescents (150 white and 150 black), blacks expressed stronger beliefs than whites that children promote greater personal security, marital success, and approval of others.

Consequences of Teenage Childbearing

Health. Girls under 16 are five times more likely to die during or immediately after pregnancy than women 20 to 24. Their infants have a higher incidence of toxemia, anemia, nutritional deficiencies, low birthweight, and retardation than infants of older women (Black & DeBlassie, 1985).

Education. More than one fifth of all girls who drop out of school do so because they are pregnant. No more than 50 percent of teenage parents eventually graduate from high school.

Employment. Teen parents are also more likely to have difficulties getting appropriately paying jobs. More than one half of the money invested in Aid to Families with Dependent Children goes to families with a mother who first gave birth when she was a teenager (Black & DeBlassie, 1985).

Conclusion

Recently, public attention has been focused on the need to teach disadvantaged children more successfully. However, it is also necessary for schools—and for families, and society in general—to help these children refrain from engaging in problem behaviors, both those discussed above and the other destructive activities. Such intervention, difficult and controversial though it is, can be the crucial first step in an education reform program that truly meets the needs of at-risk students.

—Janine Bempechat, Helena Y. Stauber, and Niobe Way

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The monograph on which this Digest was based, *Underachievement and Educational Disadvantage: The Home and School Experience of At-Risk Youth*, is available for $8 from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education. A companion volume, *The Home and School Experience of At-Risk Youth: An Annotated Bibliography of Research Studies*, is available for $3 from the Clearinghouse.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Fact Sheet

Teenage Suicide: Identification, Intervention and Prevention

The teenage suicide rate has risen to crisis proportions over the past 20 years. Between 1957 and 1975, the rate of suicide among 15 to 24 year olds tripled; among Native American adolescents, the suicide rate increased 1000% (*Teenagers in Crisis*, 1983). It is estimated that 5,000 to 6,000 teenagers kill themselves each year, and at least ten times that many attempt to do so. Because many suicide attempts go unreported or are reported as accidents, the estimated number may be as high as 500,000 per year. While females attempt suicide more often than males, at a rate of 4:1, males "succeed" more often, at the same rate (*Suicide Among School Age Youth*, 1984).

The Context of Suicide: A Stressful Environment

How do researchers interpret this phenomenon? The rising rate has been explained as a reaction to the stress inherent in adolescence compounded by increasing stress in the environment. Adolescence is a time when ordinary levels of stress are heightened by physical, psychological, emotional, and social changes. Adolescents suffer a feeling of loss for the childhood they must leave behind, and undergo an arduous period of adjustment to their new adult identity. In single-parent families, this adjustment may be even more difficult. Yet society alienates adolescents from their new identity by not allowing them the rights and responsibilities of adulthood. They are no longer children, but they are not accorded the adult privileges of expressing their sexuality or holding a place in the work force.

Our achievement-oriented, highly competitive society puts pressure on teens to succeed, often forcing them to set unrealistically high personal expectations. There is increased pressure to stay in school, where success is narrowly defined and difficult to achieve. In an affluent society which emphasizes immediate rewards, adolescents are not taught to be tolerant of frustration. Blurred gender roles can also be confusing and frustrating for teens (Rosenkrantz, 1978).

Some researchers attribute teenage suicide to the weakening of the family unit. They argue that economic and political institutions have penetrated it, reducing it to a consumer unit no longer able to function as a support system, and no longer able to supply family members with a sense of stability and rootedness (*Suicide and Attempted Suicide*, 1974). Awareness of the existing state of the world, now threatened by sophisticated methods of destruction, can cause depression which contributes to the adolescent's sense of frustration, helplessness and hopelessness (Smith, 1979). Faced with these feelings and lacking coping mechanisms, adolescents can become overwhelmed and turn to escapist measures such as drugs, withdrawal and ultimately suicide.

Identification: Suicide as Part of a Process

Contrary to popular belief, suicide is not an impulsive act but the result of a three-step process: a **previous history of problems** is compounded by **problems associated with adolescence**; finally, a **precipitating event**, often a death or the end of a meaningful relationship, triggers the suicide (McBrien, 1983). Long-term problems can include: losing a parent or close relative at a young age; coming from a family of divorce, or one in which there is much discord; being a victim of domestic violence or child abuse; or living with an alcoholic in the family. Hyperactivity or undiagnosed learning disabilities also pose serious long-term problems for adolescents. These problems can create further difficulties for the adolescent, causing social isolation and withdrawal, poor school performance and attendance, and repeated suicide attempts. The precipitating event which triggers a suicide attempt is usually a family crisis, a significant personal loss, or an upset to self-esteem (such as failing a course, losing one's place on a sports team or being fired from a part-time job). The anniversary of a loss can also evoke a powerful desire to commit suicide (Frederick, 1976).

Warning Signs

Many behavioral and verbal clues — some subtle, others more obvious — can alert the informed parent, teacher, counselor or friend to an adolescent's suicidal intentions. A teen at risk of committing suicide is experiencing deep depression, which may be indicated by loss of weight, appetite or interest in personal appearance; a change in sleeping pattern; fatigue; and feelings of hopelessness and low self-esteem. Sudden behavioral changes may occur: the youth may become disruptive, violent, or hostile toward family and friends; or unexplainably moody, suspicious, anxious, or selfish. He or she may spend a great deal of time daydreaming, fantasizing, or imagining ills, in extreme cases experiencing memory lapses or hallucinations.

Some signals should come through loud and clear: the teenager may express a desire to die, threaten to commit suicide, or inform friends of a plan. Self-abusive acts such as cutting off hair and self-inflicting cigarette burns are obvious suicidal gestures. The teen may develop a preoccupation with death and dying, make arrangements to give away prized possessions, withdraw from therapeutic help, or rapidly lose interest in once-valued activities and objects.

Intervention: Providing Psychological "First Aid"

Most youths who attempt suicide don't really want to die; they are crying out for help. There seems to be universal agreement on the manner in which to counsel suicidal teens:

1. Be non-judgmental.
2. Treat the youth's problems seriously, and take all threats seriously.
3. Do not try to talk the person out of it.
4. Ask direct questions, such as, "Have you been thinking of killing yourself?" Don't be afraid that you will be suggesting something the adolescent has not yet considered; usually your mentioning the topic is a relief.

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5. Communicate your concern and support.
6. Offer yourself as a caring listener until professional help can be arranged.
7. Try to evaluate the seriousness of the risk, in order to make the appropriate referral to a health care professional, counselor, or concerned teacher.
8. Do not swear to secrecy. Contact someone who can help the adolescent if he or she will not do it personally.
9. *Do not leave the person alone* if you feel the threat is immediate.

In a counseling situation, a contract can be an effective prevention technique. The adolescent signs a card which states that he or she agrees not to take the final step of suicide while interacting with the counselor (Ray, 1983).

Once past the crisis, follow-up is crucial, because most suicides occur within three months of the beginning of improvement, when the youth has the energy to carry out plans conceived earlier. Regularly scheduled supportive counseling should be provided to teach the youth coping mechanisms for managing stress accompanying a life crisis, as well as day-to-day stress.

Prevention

Community members, mental health professionals, school personnel, peers, and parents can play major roles in the prevention of teenage suicide. Programs that build adolescents' self-esteem and inspire a sense of inclusion in rather than alienation from society have been found to be particularly effective. Churches and other religious communities can sponsor suicide prevention programs, and engage youth in the planning and implementation of programs for aiding the elderly, working in day care centers, training peer counselors, and improving the environment. Libraries can sponsor similar programs which teens can develop, manage, and supervise themselves. Afterschool programs can be established in community centers to provide organized outings for cultural enrichment, computer training, tutoring, job counseling, sexuality counseling, crisis intervention, and/or health care. When staffed by people who care, these centers have the potential to become solid support networks for teenagers.

Mental health personnel can educate students, counselors, teachers, and others, such as nurses and religious youth group leaders, in suicide identification and prevention. They can lead crisis intervention workshops for counselors and teachers and train peer counselors in middle and high schools. They can establish suicide crisis centers with telephone hotlines, support groups, outreach teams to facilitate grief groups for families and in schools, and research facilities for further study.

School counselors can act as liaisons between the community and the school, between mental health professionals and teachers, and between suicidal teens and parents. They can also:

- Alert school officials to the seriousness of the issue.
- Sponsor staff development workshops to alert teachers to potential suicide risks.
- Present educational films to the school population.
- Offer stress management workshops to teens.
- Train peer counselors.
- Establish support groups for teens.
- Staff drop-in centers, providing a counseling atmosphere of support and acceptance.
- Construct a referral network of psychiatrists, psychologists, and social workers to contact in case of emergency.
- Arrange remedial reading courses to alleviate feelings of frustration and low self-esteem in adolescents with reading problems.
- Advocate that the school offer a wide variety of extracurricular activities to youth.
- Encourage more personalized teacher-student relationships.

Teachers play an especially important part in prevention, because they spend so much time with their students. Along with holding parent-teacher meetings to discuss teenage suicide prevention, teachers can form referral networks with mental health professionals. They can increase student awareness by introducing the topic in health classes. Students should learn how to identify those at risk of suicide, how to intervene with good listening and communication skills, and where to turn for help.

Peers are crucial to suicide prevention. According to one survey, 93% of the students reported that they would turn to a friend before a teacher, parent or spiritual guide in a time of crisis (*Teenagers in Crisis,* 1983). Peers can form student support groups and, once educated themselves, can train others to be peer counselors.

Finally, parents need to be as open and as attentive as possible to their adolescent children's difficulties. The most effective suicide prevention technique parents can exercise is to maintain open lines of communication with their children. Sometimes teens hide their problems, not wanting to burden the people they love. It is extremely important to assure teens that they can share their troubles, and gain support in the process. Parents are encouraged to talk about suicide with their children, and to educate themselves by forming study groups with other parents, or by attending parent-teacher or parent-counselor education sessions. Once trained, parents can help to staff a crisis hotline in their community. Parents also need to be involved in the counseling process if a teen has suicidal tendencies. These activities may both alleviate parents' fears of the unknown, and assure teenagers that their parents care.

It is possible, through the coordinated actions of parents, peers, school personnel, and the community at large, to reverse the growing trend of teenage suicide. Counselors can make the difference, by providing the leadership and motivation to guide the efforts of youngsters and adults.

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HIGHLIGHTS

...An ERIC/CAPS Digest

Understanding and Managing Stress in the Academic World

Stress is a necessary and an unavoidable concomitant of daily living—necessary because without some stress we would be listless and apathetic creatures, and unavoidable because it relates to any external event, be it pleasurable or anxiety-producing. Severe stress has been correlated with coronary disease, respiratory problems, backaches, high blood pressure, and other psychosomatic illnesses, to the extent that for most people stress is a loaded term that connotes unhealthy or harmful conditions, i.e., a dis-ease or illness. In truth, however, stress can also motivate and invigorate and enable people to achieve far more than they thought themselves capable of doing.

Generalizations Regarding Stress

- Stress is connected with life changes, personal and/or work-related; and too many changes at one time, either positive or negative, can overload an individual's capacity to adapt successfully and result in illness of one sort or another.
- What may be distressful to one person may be excitingly challenging (positively stressful) to another.
- The same event can be distressful at one time and stimulating or non-stressful at another.
- Whether an event causes distress depends upon the individual's perception of the situation.
- How a person responds to stress depends upon the environment, the magnitude of the stressor, what has gone before, the person's self-perceived ability to handle the stressor, the person's physical condition, and just plain habit.
- Stress can be self-imposed—e.g., setting too high standards or having unrealistic expectations regarding one's abilities; or situational—e.g., time constraints, lack of resources, threats to emotional or physical well-being, challenges beyond one's ability to respond, conflicts between one's personal values and the values of others.
- Type A personalities (people who exhibit a high degree of such traits as self-control, impatience, competitiveness, tenseness, inability to relax, orientation to achievement, and denial of failure) appear to be more prone to stressful reactions than those who are able to relax without guilt, who move and talk more slowly, who are content to do one thing at a time, and who generally take themselves less seriously than their counterparts.

In general, then, most stressors are in themselves neutral and do not necessarily produce distressful reactions. Adverse physical and emotional consequences are usually the result of the way an individual perceives particular events or conditions.

Faculty/Counselor Distress

In 1983, a major national study (Gmelch, Wilke, & Lovrich) revealed the existence of a fairly diffuse problem of stress in university settings as opposed to more discipline-specific problems. Of the three functions performed by most faculty in higher education—teaching, research, and service activities—teaching was designated as the most stressful. The ten most troublesome areas for faculty, those that caused the most stress, appeared to be the following: imposing excessively high self-expectations; securing financial support for research; having insufficient time to keep abreast with current events in the field; receiving low pay for work done; striving for publication of individual research; feeling continually overloaded with work; interference of job demands with personal activities; lack of progress in the individual's career; interruptions from telephone and drop-in visitors; and meetings. The majority of these ten top stressors, it will be noted, relate directly to time and/or resource complaints.

Burnout is a distinctive kind of job-related stress that inhibits the person's capacity to function effectively because the body's resources for resisting stress have become exhausted. Research indicates that individuals engaged in the helping professions or human services are especially susceptible to burnout. Burnout is not just a temporary indisposition but an unhealthy condition that makes once idealistic, productive, enthusiastic workers detriments to their profession, their colleagues, and themselves. Strangely enough, burnout usually affects the most able individuals—those who are the most competent and committed, those who feel the most strongly about the value of what they do and want to do their best. Academic institutions are now paying increased attention to burnout because it diminishes the effective services of the very best people in a given profession.

Student Distress

Students entering college can experience a reaction similar to shock as they attempt to respond to the multiplicity of responsibilities facing them such as organizing their time, handling new social interactions, dealing with changes in their relationships with home base, and adapting to life on a huge campus with large numbers of students. Research on student stress is fairly recent, stemming from not more than a decade ago, but evidence from several studies suggests that academic performance

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is the most critical concern of students, especially first-year students, and that the problems perceived to be the most intense sources of stress are examinations and grades, financial concerns, fear of failure on specific assignments, and career decisions. Johnson's research (1978) revealed nine major categories of student stress, and his findings are supported by the results of several later studies. These categories are instruction, competition, organization of time, adjustment to college, administrative problems, social adjustment, finances, housing, and transportation. An analysis of the research involving student stress indicates that the most critical stressors have to do with the instructional process itself—grades, examinations, and studying.

Stress-Coping Strategies for Faculty and Counselors

Faculty methods of coping with stress may be classified into two major categories: primarily preventive strategies and primarily combative strategies ("Stress Counseling," 1986). *Preventive strategies* include the following:

1. **Avoiding stressors through appropriate life adjustments**—developing more nurturing relationships, finding a more suitable job, attempting to create a working environment and/or style that is more rewarding.
2. **Managing the expectations and demands made upon oneself**—keeping tasks in perspective, maintaining realistic self-expectations.
3. **Changing stress-inducing ways of behaving and responding**—recognizing unproductive behaviors, finding alternate ways of behaving.
4. **Augmenting personal coping resources**—assessing personal assets, knowing personal strengths, bringing them to bear on difficult situations.

Combative strategies include the following:

1. **Stress monitoring**—being aware of stress-related symptoms within oneself.
2. **Marshalling personal resources**—reflecting on past successes in dealing with strong stressors, focusing on the positive.
3. **Taking action to reduce the stressor**—being assertive, confronting issues, refusing inappropriate requests for additional responsibilities.
4. **Developing tolerance for unavoidable stress**—cognitively restructuring the situation, looking for potential positive outcomes.
5. **Lowering stress arousal**—trying to avoid thinking about a troublesome stressor, blocking it out of one's consciousness.

Faculty/Counselor Aids to Reducing Stress in Students

Faculty and counselors should attempt to challenge students, but not so much that they lose their motivation, spontaneity, and initiative. The following suggestions for those who work with students can help minimize sources of student stress:

1. Be explicit and extremely clear on all expectations and responsibilities for students and communicate in such a way that students feel free to question and discuss.
2. Develop a positive interactive relationship with students.
3. Adopt a distinct and defensible reward structure.
4. Allow students to have at least a modicum sense of control over their student roles.
5. Treat students as individuals rather than as a generalized whole.
6. Assist students to learn stress-coping strategies.

Summary

Faculty and counselors who are distressed will be less effective in what they do. The self-absorption that often accompanies negative stress can obstruct stimulating teaching and empathic listening. Tension and ill health can undermine job performance. Disappointment and frustration are inevitable occupational hazards in either teaching or counseling, and those who work with students should keep a realistic perspective toward the goals and limitations of what they can achieve. Most of all, faculty and counselors should not only have a thorough understanding of stress but should also demonstrate the ability to implement appropriate practices in their own lives, thus modeling positive stress management for their students and clients. Those who help students deal effectively with stress are performing a service of lasting value, as healthy stress management is one of the most important life-long learning skills that an individual may acquire.

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HIGHLIGHTS

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Understanding and Parenting Adolescents

Living with a teenage son or daughter on a daily basis often makes parents feel anxious, angry, uncertain, or inept. Despite the occasional horror story regarding adolescence, the majority of teenagers in America navigate this phase of development quite well. Unfortunately, parents cannot know with certainty the health and strength of their adolescent until several years after they leave this phase (Klimek, 1987). On the one hand, parents may have some control over their child's behavior and may get their youngster to conform to their standards, but the child's personality may not be developing in optimal health. Conversely, the adolescent who goes against the grain of the family, especially a dysfunctional family, may look ill on the outside, but may be coming into his/her own health on the interior. In short, the process of real growth during the adolescent years (and in adulthood) may not be easily discernible even by child development experts.

Psychological Task of Adolescence

The task of becoming one's own person, as opposed to mimicking parental and societal roles, is the major job of adolescence. This process, however, is not simple and in many respects is similar to the mourning-loss-grief phase seen in adults. Episodes of doubt, caution, fear, vulnerability, and susceptibility to bronchial infections, colds, and physical aches and pains are symptoms of the depressive phase of adolescence. Manic phases are reflected in elevated mood, loudness, hyperactivity, excitability, poor judgment, and the desire to get away from home. Vacillation between these phases is necessary to maneuver successfully through the adolescent years (Klimek, 1987). To be manic all the time is to short-circuit the development of a sensitive, caring, responsible, and real inner core. To be depressed all the time is to limit the positive influences and interactions of the real world. Furthermore, most parents, teachers, and counselors have every right to be concerned when a youngster appears chronically depressed and should seriously consider a referral for professional help.

Getting Better—Getting Worse

Because adolescence is a time for separating from the direct, day-to-day influence and control of parents, it is also a time when youngsters minimize their dependence upon parents for love, support, care, direction, and security. Adolescence is a phase when relationships with peers and reality slowly replace the relationship with parents. In dysfunctional families, youngsters often are unable to chart a healthy course of separation-individuation because they try to get away from parental influence too early and become excessively peer dependent. Teenagers of dysfunctional families may be unprepared to separate-individuate also because they lack an adequate foundation of the self, or because parental dependence and neglect holds them back. Such youngsters seldom navigate a course of healthy adaptation because they essentially have had an unhealthy upbringing.

Regardless of the family's health, the adolescent's pulling away from parental control toward self-direction and peer influence carries with it a delicate balance. This balance consists of getting better or getting worse, both psychologically and behaviorally. Many parents are too emotionally involved with their children or too caught up with their own problems to help the youngsters chart their way. Therefore, a checklist of inner life processes may be helpful in determining whether a child (or parent) is growing or regressing.

Child and Parent Checklist

A few times each year, parents are encouraged to evaluate their teenager and themselves for indications of healthy or unhealthy functioning. Parents are also encouraged to help their child or themselves work on one characteristic at a time to avoid unrealistic expectations of "instant perfection." It is the direct work on oneself that enables parents to become more patient and empathic with their child. Real growth is extremely difficult and requires a great deal of consciousness, encouragement, and support if one is to achieve higher levels of mental health. If parents are also growing, they will know the difficulty of real growth and tend to be less critical, controlling, demanding, and rejecting, while becoming more sensitive, caring, and loving.

The observable behaviors that reflect inner, psychological mechanisms are listed below. When parents are conducting the evaluation, they should see improvements in the following areas if growth is occurring:

- Self-containment
- Self-knowledge
- Self-fulfillment
- Capacity for appreciation or gratitude
- Openmindedness
- Peace of mind
- Skill acquisition or mastery
- Self-direction and capacity to plan ahead and be responsible

Conversely, if a child or parent is worsening or psychologically regressing, the following characteristics are more prevalent:

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- Anger, hostility, resentment or bitterness
- Depression, despair, hopelessness, or cynicism
- Rigidity
- Obsessions—alcohol, sex, drugs
- Envy, jealousy
- Increased self-centeredness
- Disregard for feelings of others
- Conflictual or dissatisfying interpersonal relationships
- Little or no capacity for appreciation

Patterns of Family Development

Familiarity with the stages of family life helps in determining how and why a particular family may be having difficulty accommodating, restructuring, and changing in support of the developing adolescent. When a family is understood as a system, change or difficulty in one part of the family is viewed as affecting all of the family members (Bowen, 1978). The midlife stage of parental development often coincides with the adolescent stage of individual development, typifying how stress in one part of the family can affect the other part.

Midlife Parental Development. Parents in the midlife reappraisal stage may focus too much energy on career crisis, loneliness, or anticipation of the empty nest. They may become highly resistant to changes associated with adolescent development, feeling that change suggests failure or fearing the unknowns of their child's pulling away. A primary source of difficulty for these parents is their own inadequate separation from their family of origin, as well as their own unresolved adolescent issues. Parents in this struggle can become short-sighted and overreact to the periodic oppositional and negative behaviors that are typical of adolescence.

If parents become rigid, defensive, and over-controlling, their adolescents are likely to feel imprisoned and stifled, and conflict is inevitable. Some adolescents in these instances may experience a significant diminution in self-development as they compromise themselves in an effort to save their families. They can also get caught in triangulated relationships with their parents when they unconsciously assimilate parental pain, thus stabilizing the family by keeping the parents focused on them instead of their own conflicts. Adolescents in unsupportive families may experience excessive pressure to excel in order to boost their parents' self-esteem.

Influence of Previous Generations. The root of numerous adolescent struggles is the inability to separate-individuate adequately from their families. The format for such conflict often stems from similar problems of family members in previous generations (Haley, 1980). When adolescents challenge the family's history, traditions, or values, family members have to develop negotiation skills in order to redefine family rules, roles, and relationships. This negotiation and redefinition serves to adjust, accommodate, and encourage the adolescent process of separation-individuation. The influence of siblings is important to understand, particularly when one child is regarded as "good and perfect." Such special-status youngsters often stimulate an opposite reaction among the other siblings which proves baffling to the parents.

In general, adolescent problem behaviors need to be evaluated in light of the entire spectrum of family issues that may be interfering with the natural progression of individual development. If this is understood, appropriate responses can be planned and negotiated among family members so that a healthy resolution is achieved for everyone.

Role of Adults Outside the Family

Reliable, significant others outside the family play an important role in facilitating the transition from adolescence to adulthood. These outside adults need to understand individual growth and family dynamics, as well as to possess a level of self-development that enables them to apply their knowledge appropriately. They also need to maintain a realistic view of the temporary resistance, allegiance, or idealization that teenagers form in response to adults who try to help them. Counselors need to anticipate and recognize the transference reactions typical of adolescents who are working out unresolved family issues in the counseling relationship. To become aware of family themes and patterns over generations, counselors can employ genograms which help adolescents objectively locate and identify factors influencing their self-image, response to life, and reactions to relationships (Hartman, 1978).

Summary

To facilitate authentic adolescent growth, parents and other concerned adults need to (1) achieve and maintain emotional neutrality; (2) develop the capacity for genuinely relating to and enjoying the uniqueness of each youngster; and (3) adhere to the larger developmental perspective. Regardless of the potential for problems during adolescence, the majority of teenagers who go "off course" usually get back on during their early or mid-twenties. When one scrutinizes the process of parenting and the process of adolescent development, it is a small wonder that anyone does very well. Yet professional help is not always the answer—to paraphrase Karen Horney, one of the first psychoanalysts to study family influences, life itself teaches us best how to grow.

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ERIC DIGEST

Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools September 1990

Undocumented Children in the Schools: Successful Strategies and Policies

Digest EDO-RC-90-4

UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS are people who have not been legally admitted into the United States. Estimates of the size of this population vary widely, from about 3 million to 12 million (Willshire Carrera, 1989a). Census data suggest, however, that of the millions of undocumented immigrants in this country, 77 percent are from Mexico and Latin America. Approximately 20 percent come (in equal numbers) from Asia and Europe (Willshire Carrera, 1989a).

One-fifth of all undocumented immigrants are estimated to be children under the age of 15 (Willshire Carrera, 1989a). Although undocumented children are not legal residents of the United States, they have the right to attend public school. Since 1982, a Supreme Court ruling, *Plyler v Doe*, has guaranteed this right.

This Digest reports the background of this landmark case and describes the difficulties that undocumented children are likely to face as a result of their status. Next, it considers the educational rights of undocumented children and the responsibilities of schools that serve them. Finally, it summarizes both practices to avoid and practices that can benefit this group of students.

Background of the Plyler case

The access of undocumented children to public schools in the U.S. is naturally an issue in states like Texas, where many undocumented immigrants live (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1988). Before 1982, a Texas law prevented state funds from being used for the education of undocumented children. Under Texas law, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) could deny enrollment to such students.

In *Plyler v Doe*, however, the United States Supreme Court held, in a five-to-four decision, that the Texas law was unconstitutional. The ruling was based on the equal protection provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Of particular concern to the Court was the fact that children—rather than their parents—were involved (Uerling, 1982). The Court believed that denying undocumented children access to education punished children for their parents' behavior. Such an action, the Court noted, did not square with basic ideas of justice (Uerling, 1982).

Following the *Plyler* ruling, many undocumented students began to attend public schools in the United States (Haney, 1987). Because of the protections imposed by *Plyler*, however, the exact size of this group of students is difficult to estimate.

Undocumented children in the United States

All students deal with stressful events as they mature. Immigrant students, however, face additional challenges (Willshire Carrera, 1989b). The most distressing may include violence (often a result of warfare or civil strife in children's native lands) and separation from family members. Other stresses include adaptation to a new culture, the challenge of learning a new language, and, often, the insult of racial discrimination in this country (Willshire Carrera, 1989a). Many immigrant families have a difficult time simply making ends meet; many lead lives of poverty in urban areas (First, Kellogg, Carrera, Lewis, & Almeida, 1988; Olsen & Chen, 1987; Valdivieso (1990).

As a subset of the immigrant population, undocumented children are likely to confront the most distressing experiences of all (First et al., 1988). In addition to the usual experiences of growing up, and the unusual stress of immigration, undocumented immigrant children worry about deportation (Willshire Carrera, 1989a). If their undocumented status is discovered, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) has the legal authority to investigate them. Further, the INS may detain them—apart from their families—in federally operated centers (First et al., 1988; Morales, 1987).

Access: Students' rights and schools' responsibilities

Plyler addressed the usual link between residency and the right to attend public school. The Court found that residency requirements are constitutional only if they are properly defined, uniformly applied, and designed to further a substantial state interest. In the case of undocumented children, the Court found that state residency requirements do not meet these tests.

States can no longer use residency requirements to deny undocumented children access to a tuition-free public education. Under *Plyler*, undocumented immigrant students have the same right to attend public schools through grade 12 as do citizens and permanent residents.

School staff need to be aware and sensitive as they deal with all immigrant students. In particular, they must act to preserve the right of access, especially by guarding the confidentiality of students' immigration status. In fact, if an undocumented student reasonably *perceives* that an action has the intent of exposing immigration status, then the right of access is compromised (Willshire Carrera, 1989a).

Plyler, moreover, requires that schools apply the right of access to *all* immigrant students. This step guards against improper distinctions between documented and undocumented children. One exception exists. Immigrants with F-1 and M-1 visas are required by Congress to get the approval of the INS before they may attend school in the U.S. (Willshire Carrera, 1989a). This provision, however, does not apply to other immigrant students, including undocumented immigrant children.

What should school staff do?

At a minimum, school staff should *avoid* certain actions. The spirit of the decision is that school staff should work to make access a *meaningful benefit*. The right of access, for example, implies that undocumented students also have access to appropriate special programs available to other students.

Actions schools should avoid include the following (Willshire Carrera, 1989b):

- asking about a student's immigration status or requesting documentation at any time;
- barring access to a student on the basis of undocumented status or alleged undocumented status;
- treating one student differently from others in order to determine residency, or on the basis of undocumented status;
- making inquiries of a student or parent that might expose the undocumented status of either; and
- requiring undocumented students or their parents to apply for Social Security numbers.

The final point may need some explanation. Because undocumented students are not eligible for Social Security numbers, schools may not require them as a condition of enrollment. If school staff *must* distribute application forms, they should stress that completing the forms is up to students and parents. Parents and students must understand that school staff will not monitor the actual filing of the forms.

In general, the activities of the INS and the professional obligations of public school staff do not intersect. Schools, for example, may not contact INS about any undocumented student. Officials of the INS should be welcomed in schools only with a valid subpoena or legal warrant (see Willshire Carrera, 1989b, for more details). If a school should inadvertently discover an undocumented status, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (and similar state acts) pertain. These laws bar the school from supplying such information to any organization, including the INS.

For the most part, the above recommendations concern procedures. Meaningful benefits, however, are what the right of access is all about. Willshire Carrera (1989a) recommends that, in responding to the needs of undocumented students, school staff:

- understand the troubled nature of immigrants' daily lives;
- understand and actively provide the right of access established by *Plyler*;
- establish a school climate that all immigrant students will find open and hospitable;
- provide counseling and guidance that is responsive to the conditions of immigrant students' lives;
- develop policies and practices that strengthen immigrant students' access to effective instruction;
- respect immigrant communities' native languages and cultures, but at the same time, help immigrant students learn English well;
- hire, train, and retain competent staff who can provide appropriate services to immigrant students; and
- develop strong working relationships with immigrant families.

Teachers, administrators, and other school staff should strive to treat undocumented students with the same respect and care they show for other students. Effective instruction, productive school climate, parent involvement, the methods of sound bilingual education—all are needed by undocumented students, as they are by other immigrant, bilingual, and special needs students.

Access to public schools in the United States entitles undocumented students to the varied benefits provided by a number of special programs. These programs include (1) the Emergency Immigrant Education Program, (2) those that receive funds under Section 204 of the Immigrant Reform and Control Act, (3) the Transitional Program for Refugee Children, (4) bilingual education programs, (5) Chapter 1 programs, (6) Headstart programs, (7) special education, and (8) free and reduced meal programs (see Willshire Carrera, 1989a, for more details).

The bottom line

Because undocumented students lead lives under threat and suspicion, many leave school before graduation. Others simply do not enroll in school in the first place. Teachers and administrators can foster—both in the school itself and in the community—the atmosphere of acceptance, security, and trust that undocumented children desperately need. Instruction should reflect both a respect for native cultures and a commitment to helping students master English. Careful staffing is also important in creating programs that can respond sensitively to the needs of undocumented students.

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ERIC Clearinghouse on Tests, Measurement, and Evaluation **Digest EDO-TM-89-3 December 1989**

Using customized standardized tests

Paul L. Williams, CTB/McGraw-Hill

Over the next several years it is likely that you'll see a subtle but important change in the nature of standardized tests that are administered as part of your state and district testing programs. This change results from a desire to improve both the norm- and criterion-referenced interpretations of student, school, district, and state testing data. These interpretations can be improved by customizing the traditional norm-referenced test.

Norm-referenced tests are designed to give you both normative and objective information. Normative information may take the form of scale scores, percentile ranks, grade equivalents, normal curve equivalents, and stanines. Objective performance is usually reported as a percentage master score based on the objectives included on the norm-referenced test.

Normative scores allow you to compare individuals and groups with national performance levels, and objective scores allow you to make comparisons relative to specific objectives. Together, these scores allow you to plan programs for your school and district and instruction for individual students.

When used correctly, this information is invaluable for school administrators. However, several improvements can be made so that you can make even better programmatic and individual plans, such as

- reducing testing time,
- increasing the relevance of the test to the curriculum, and
- having greater confidence in the national comparative information.

These improvements are the goals of custom-made norm-referenced tests.

Several models for constructing custom-made norm-reference tests have been attempted, with some degree of success. A discussion of three models follows.

A model used in Texas

For the last few years, Texas has used a model state criterion-referenced test, which was statistically equated to a nationally normed norm-referenced test. Texas now administers the criterion-referenced test instead of the norm-referenced test and both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced scores are produced.

The advantages of this approach are reduced testing time and greater relevance to the Texas curriculum than could be obtained from using the norm-referenced test alone.

However, this approach has several disadvantages:

- Equating these two different tests will result in inaccurate norm-referenced scores because of differences in test difficulty and content between the norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests. Criterion-referenced scores are unaffected by the equating.
- Instruction focused on the curriculum will likely increase both the criterion-referenced scores and, as a result, the equated norm-referenced scores. Although score increases on the criterion-referenced portion of the test may accurately reflect student learning in these restricted domains, this is not the case for the much broader norm-referenced domains.

This is because instruction has been effectively focused on only a portion of the traits measured by norm-referenced tests, thus producing higher equated norm-referenced scores than would be expected if the original norm-referenced test or a proper sample of items from that test were administered.

When this distortion happens, the norm-referenced scores produced from this model are called norm-invalid. That is, the customized test does not accurately reproduce the normative scores that would have resulted had the entire norm-referenced test been administered.

For a custom-made norm-referenced test to be fair, the scores must be norm-valid (Yen, Green, and Burket, 1987). Texas will leave this model in 1990 in favor of one that may be more successful in producing scores that approach norm-validity.

A second model

A second model of a custom-made test is one in which state- or district-developed criterion-referenced items are combined with a complete norm-referenced test. Norm-referenced scores are generated from the complete norm-referenced test, while objective information is derived from a combination of norm-referenced and locally developed items.

This type of test reduces testing time because only one customized test is administered instead of both a norm-referenced and a criterion-referenced test. However, as with the Texas model that we discussed, norm invalidity may be a problem.

If instruction is carefully targeted at the objectives and a subset of the norm-referenced test items is used for reporting achievement by objective, then norm-invalidity could result because instruction influences only a portion of the trait measured by the norm-referenced test. In this case, the norm-referenced scores could be inflated by the targeted instruction, thus rendering them invalid.

A model used in Tennessee

Another model of a customized test was recently adopted by the State of Tennessee. The Tennessee model remedies the shortcomings of the first two models that we described. This model uses approximately 40 items instead of a full-length test of 80 to 110 items for its norm-referenced module and a criterion-referenced module of state-developed items.

The norm-referenced module was specifically created so that it has proper statistical characteristics of reliability, adequate floors and ceilings, and articulation across test levels. Tennessee will use multiple test forms.

Items used for the norm-referenced portion are not intended to be used for objective scores, and the criterion-referenced items are not used as part of the norm-referenced scores.

Effective instruction targeted toward the state objectives will demonstrate student attainment of the state's objectives, and the norm-referenced portion will provide norm-valid scores. Thus, the Tennessee model reduces testing time and requires only one testing period rather than two. The objective scores will be useful for instructional planning and the norm-referenced scores can be used with confidence for national comparisons.

A note about norm-validity

As a school administrator, you should be concerned about the norm-validity of your district's test scores. During times of increased school, district, state, and national achievement (as we see now), critics may be quick to question the validity of your test results. Critics may point out that teachers are too familiar with the test items, that they teach actual test items, or that the scores may not reflect true changes in achievement. Williams (1988) and Koretz (1988a, 1988b) have both presented a distinction between changes in test scores and changes in achievement.

Changes in test scores may result from a variety of instructional and administrative interventions, but changes in test scores may not reflect actual changes in achievement. Special coaching, inappropriate test preparation materials and methods, and narrowly targeted instruction may all increase test scores, but they do not necessarily lead to sustained and abiding increases in achievement.

Just as instruction must support test score changes that are not spurious, i.e. produce true growth, test instruments must be designed and implemented so that if score increases occur, they represent a true change in achievement and are not the result of an inadequately designed customized testing program.

Unless a customized norm-referenced test produces norm-valid scores, you cannot provide test results that reflect true changes in achievement. Even with an optimally designed customized test, abuses can still result. But without a properly designed customized norm-referenced test, you cannot demonstrate that achievement, rather than just test scores, has improved.

Administrators at all levels must be able to tell the difference between norm-valid tests that allow actual achievement to be demonstrated and norm-invalid ones. When norm-valid test are used, you can report the test results with confidence.

If you have confidence in the test's quality, then test scores will accurately reflect meaningful changes in student achievement. Thus, you will be able to determine the effectiveness of your instructional program.

If you have a norm-valid test, you can show your constituents that changes in the test scores are real. When these changes represent increases, your community and staff can be satisfied the instructional program works in the areas the test measures. If the score changes represent a decrease, then the test results can help you identify areas that need additional instructional effort. In either case, the students win because instructional support is forthcoming.

Customized norm-referenced tests offer a viable alternative to both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests. One test, instead of two, is all that needs to be administered. Disruption in the schools is reduced, testing time is reduced, and instructional time is maximized. Alternate forms of customized norm-referenced tests can be used, minimizing criticisms of test familiarity and inappropriate test preparation activities. Teachers will be more likely to teach the complete curriculum, and increased achievement, rather than just increased scores, can result.

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ERIC
Digest

What Should Young Children Be Learning?

Lilian G. Katz

Recent research on intellectual and social development and learning is rich in implications for curriculum and teaching strategies for early childhood education. Unfortunately, educational practices tend to lag behind what is known about teaching and learning. This digest discusses curriculum and the methods of teaching which best serve children's long-term development.

The Nature of Development

The concept of development includes two dimensions: the normative dimension, concerning the capabilities and limitations of most children at a given age, and the dynamic dimension, concerning the sequence and changes that occur in all aspects of the child's functioning as he grows. It also addresses the cumulative effects of experience. While the normative dimension indicates what children can and cannot do at a given age, the dynamic dimension raises questions about what children should or should not do at a particular time in their development in light of possible long-term consequences.

In many preschool programs and kindergartens, young children are engaged in filling out worksheets, reading from flash cards or reciting numbers in rote fashion. But just because young children can do those things, in a normative sense, is not sufficient justification for requiring them to do so. Young children usually do willingly most things adults ask of them. But their willingness is not a reliable indicator of the value of an activity. The developmental question is not, What can children do? Rather it is, What should children do that best serves their development and learning in the long term?

Learning Through Interaction

Contemporary research confirms the view that young children learn most effectively when they are engaged in interaction rather than in merely receptive or passive activities. Young children should be interacting with adults, materials and their surroundings in ways which help them make sense of their own experience and environment. They should be investigating and observing aspects of their environment worth learning about, and recording their findings and observations through talk, paintings and drawings. Interaction that arises in the course of such activities provides a context for much social and cognitive learning.

Four Categories of Learning

The four categories of learning outlined below are especially relevant to the education of young children:

- Knowledge. In early childhood, knowledge consists of facts, concepts, ideas, vocabulary, and stories. A child acquires knowledge from someone's answers to his questions, explanations, descriptions and accounts of events as well as through observation.
- Skills. Skills are small units of action which occur in a relatively short period of time and are easily observed or inferred. Physical, social, verbal, counting and drawing skills are among a few of the almost endless number of skills learned in the early years. Skills can be learned from direct instruction and improved with practice and drill.
- Feelings. These are subjective emotional states, many of which are innate. Among those that are learned are feelings of competence, belonging, and security. Feelings about school, teachers, learning and other children are also learned in the early years.
- Dispositions. Dispositions can be thought of as habits of mind or tendencies to respond to certain situations in certain ways. Curiosity, friendliness or unfriendliness, bossiness, and creativity are dispositions or sets of dispositions rather than skills or pieces of knowledge. There is a significant difference between having writing skills and having the disposition to be a writer.

  Dispositions are not learned through instruction or drill. The dispositions that children need to acquire or to strengthen—curiosity, creativity, cooperation, friendliness—are learned primarily from being around people who exhibit them. It is unfortunate that some dispositions, such as being curious or puzzled, are rarely displayed by adults in front of children.

  A child who is to learn a particular disposition must have the opportunity to behave in a manner that is in keeping with the disposition.

When that occurs, the child's behavior can be responded to, and thus strengthened. Teachers can strengthen certain dispositions by setting learning goals rather than performance goals. A teacher who says, "I want to see how much you can find out about something," rather than, "I want to see how well you can do," encourages children to focus on what they are learning rather than on their performance, and how others will judge their performance.

Risks of Early Academic Instruction

Research on the long-term effects of various curriculum models suggests that the introduction of academic work into the early childhood curriculum yields good results on standardized tests in the short term, but may be counterproductive in the long term. For example, the risk of early instruction in beginning reading skills is that the amount of drill and practice required for success at an early age will undermine children's dispositions to be readers. It is clearly not useful for a child to learn skills if, in the process of acquiring them, the disposition to use them is lost. On the other hand, obtaining the disposition without the requisite skills is not desirable either. Results from longitudinal studies suggest that curricula and teaching methods should be designed to optimize the acquisition of knowledge, skills, desirable dispositions and feelings.

Another risk of introducing young children to academic work prematurely is that those who cannot relate to the tasks required are likely to feel incompetent. Students who repeatedly experience difficulties may come to consider themselves stupid and may bring their behavior into line accordingly.

Variety of Teaching Methods

Academically focused curricula for preschool programs typically adopt a single pedagogical method dominated by workbooks, drill and practice. It is reasonable to assume that when a single teaching method is used for a diverse group of children, a significant proportion of these children are likely to fail. The younger the children are, the greater the variety of teaching methods there should be, since the younger the group is, the less likely the children are to have been socialized into a standard way of responding to their environment, and the more likely it is that the children's readiness to learn is influenced by background experiences which are idiosyncratic and unique.

For practical reasons there are limits to how varied teaching methods can be. It should be noted, however, that while approaches dominated by workbooks often claim to individualize instruction, they really individualize nothing more than the day on which a child completes a routine task. Such programs can weaken the disposition to learn.

As for the learning environment, the younger the children are, the more informal it should be. Informal learning environments encourage spontaneous play and cooperative effort. In spontaneous play, children engage in whatever play activities interest them. Cooperative effort occurs when children engage in such activities as group projects, investigations, and constructions.

Conclusion

Spontaneous play is not the only alternative to early academic instruction. The data on children's learning suggests that preschool and kindergarten experiences require an intellectually oriented approach in which children interact in small groups as they work together on projects which help them make sense of their own experience. These projects should also strengthen their dispositions to observe, experiment, inquire, and examine more closely the worthwhile aspects of their environment.

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Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education

WOMEN, WORK, AND LITERACY

The basic skills requirements of the workplace are increasing; at the same time, women are entering the work force in larger numbers. Women's success in the labor force and their economic self-sufficiency depend upon both literacy improvement and employability training. This **ERIC Digest**, based on publications of Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), portrays the extent of the problem of illiteracy among women, looks at the changing work force and its literacy needs, and describes a program model developed by WOW to address this issue.

The Literacy Situation for Women

- An estimated 23 million adults in the United States lack basic literacy skills.
- An estimated 23 percent of all adult females have severely limited literacy skills (compared to 17 percent of all males).
- Seventy-five percent of female heads of households with less than a high school diploma are living in poverty.
- Young women with below average skills and below poverty incomes are five and one-half times more likely to become teen parents.
- Nearly 40 percent of female single parents and 35 percent of displaced homemakers have an eighth-grade education or less.
- Literacy levels of children are strongly linked to those of their parents.
- The greatest predictor of a child's future academic success is the literacy of the child's mother.
- As the numbers of families headed by low-literate women increase, the cycle of illiteracy is perpetuated.

The Changing Work Force

- By 2000, 80 percent of women aged 25-54 will be in the work force. Women will comprise 47 percent of the paid labor force. Two out of three new entrants to the labor force will be women.
- Minority women's labor force participation will increase--Hispanics by 85 percent and Blacks by 16 percent.
- At least two-thirds of all women with children under 18 will be in the labor force.
- One in eight women workers has less than a high school education--including one in two single mothers, 56 percent of displaced homemakers, one in three Hispanic women workers, and one in five Black women workers.
- Almost all of the jobs created by the year 2000 will be in the service sector.

Literacy Needs of the Work Force

- A majority of all new jobs will require education or training beyond high school.
- Only 27 percent of all new jobs will be low skilled.
- People with less than a high school education will be able to fill only 14 percent of all jobs.
- More jobs will require basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics; higher order critical thinking skills; analytical and problem-solving skills; listening, speaking, and other communication skills; basic computer skills; and teamwork skills. (Imel 1989; Watson 1989; *Women, Work and Literacy* 1988)

Combining Literacy and Employment Training

The picture painted by these statistics-of the numbers of women (especially single mothers) with low literacy levels, of the increased labor force participation of women, and of the greater literacy needs of jobs--makes the case for the inclusion of a literacy component in employment programs for women. Linking literacy education to employment and training programs can be a significant factor in improving a woman's basic skills and laying a stronger foundation for increasing her employability. Such programs should strive to be (1) comprehensive--meeting the specific needs of low-income and single mothers; (2) learner-centered--recognizing individual abilities, experiences, interests, and goals; (3) flexible; (4) standards-based; and (5) policy-linked--incorporating advocacy activities for public policy issues that will help shape literacy services.

Wider Opportunities for Women, an organization that seeks to expand employment opportunities for women through training, placement, and advocacy, developed a program model (Beck 1988; Hirschoff 1988) based on case studies of five literacy programs that focus on the needs of low-income single mothers. (Most of the model can also be used with low-literate women who are not mothers.)

The model attempts to attack the many internal and external barriers faced by women in need of both literacy and job training. Among the internal barriers are (1) low self-esteem, including past unhappy encounters with schooling, lack of family support for education, and lack of positive role models; (2) self-doubt about one's ability to learn, perhaps exacerbated by actual learning disabilities such as dyslexia; (3) powerlessness, including denial of existing barriers and inability to cope with institutions affecting one's life; and (4) guilt about taking time from their families for self-improvement.

External barriers may include (1) environmental instability (housing problems, domestic and community violence, health and financial difficulties); (2) need for support services such as child care, transportation, emergency funds, or personal counseling; (3) inaccessible or inappropriate services--due to location, schedule, enrollment requirements, inflexible testing methods, or cost; and (4) failure to set realistic goals.

The Program Model

The steps of the model (assessing, shaping the program, getting started, delivering services, measuring impact, and advocating public policy changes) are influenced by research showing that the comprehensive needs of the woman and her family must be addressed in order to have success in both literacy and employment readiness.

Assessment of current programs and the community environment is necessary to define the population to be served, determine available resources, avoid possible duplication, and begin building a referral network for the comprehensive services clients will need. Potential sources of funding for literacy/job training should be identified (for example, the Adult Education Act, the Perkins Vocational Education Act, and the Job Training Partnership Act).

Shaping the program includes (1) setting standards to guide activities and measure impact (especially important is defining literacy and integrating the notion of literacy as a critical part of employment training into the program); (2) defining the client population; and (3) establishing a budget.

When **getting started**, recruitment, intake, and assessment are the important first contacts women will have with the program. Community-based recruitment is recommended, using a wide variety of strategies that stress the messages that training can lead to a better job and economic future and that a mother's literacy improvement can help her children's achievements. Intake--determining if the program is right for the woman and vice versa--and assessment to determine placement within the program should be sensitive to past educational experiences and test anxiety. Clients should be assisted in setting realistic short- and long-term goals.

In **delivering services**, there are several considerations. Program design should be learner-centered and reinforce self-concept. Staff roles include literacy instructors, counselors, recruiters, employment specialists, and child care specialists. Support services should either be provided by the program or through referral to another agency. Evaluation through testing and staff and student input should aim at overcoming test anxiety while recognizing the existence of testing in employment situations. Rewards for student progress should be noncompetitive and nonhierarchical.

Content of a model program includes literacy components (individualized remediation plans, small groups, incremental goals, job-related reading, student-created materials, computer familiarity), employability components (job readiness, nontraditional skills training, job skills training, internships, on-the-job training, job search methods, job placement), and life skills components (program solving, decision making, and goal setting; personal and career counseling; support services).

Measuring program impact can be accomplished using standardized methods such as achievement test scores, job placement, and high school equivalency completion as well as nonstandardized methods such as participant questionnaires, focus groups, or exit interviews.

Another way to attack barriers is by **advocating changes in public policy** such as:

- o Increased federal funds for literacy and basic skills initiatives
- o Special efforts to ensure that women are equitably served in publicly funded programs
- o Improved coordination among public systems of literacy service provision
- o Expanded joint remedial programs for parents and children
- o Authorized federal and state funds for the provision of support services
- o Increased flexibility in eligibility criteria for service deliverers
- o Provision of opportunities for welfare recipients to receive educational services in addition to employment and training activities
- o Increased funding for research and demonstration projects in literacy instructional method.

Beck (1988) and Hirschoff (1988) address some additional issues related to program development that particularly affect women. For example--

--Funding sources such as the Job Training Partnership Act and the Perkins Act authorize literacy education for those receiving vocational training. However, their definitions of program completion or success (e.g., job placement) may be premature for women who may need further education and training.

--Some women in the target population will be uncomfortable in formal schooling and testing situations. Standardized tests often contain sex, class, and race bias.

--Instructional materials should recognize cultural differences, be sex fair, and take women's daily experiences into account.

--Flexible approaches to absenteeism are needed due to the barriers that may hinder women's participation.

--Differences between teaching adults and teaching younger students should be recognized.

Low-income single mothers and other low-literate women face problems so overwhelming that they usually cannot focus on literacy as an isolated goal. Therefore, literacy must be one component of a **comprehensive** strategy that provides support services and employment training as well--all of which are necessary to enable these women to break the cycles of poverty and illiteracy.

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Young Children's Oral Language Development

Celia Genishi

The development of oral language is one of the child's most natural—and impressive—accomplishments. This digest presents an overview of the process and mechanics of language development, along with implications for practice.

When and How Language Is Learned

Almost all children learn the rules of their language at an early age through use, and over time, without formal instruction. Thus one source for learning must be genetic. Humans beings are born to speak; they have an innate gift for figuring out the rules of the language used in their environment. The environment itself is also a significant factor. Children learn the specific variety of language (dialect) that the important people around them speak.

Children do not, however, learn only by imitating those around them. We know that children work through linguistic rules on their own because they use forms that adults never use, such as "I goed there before" or "I see your feets." Children eventually learn the conventional forms, *went* and *feet*, as they sort out for themselves the exceptions to the rules of English syntax. As with learning to walk, learning to talk requires time for development and practice in everyday situations. Constant correction of a child's speech is usually unproductive.

Children seem born not just to speak, but also to interact socially. Even before they use words, they use cries and gestures to convey meaning; they often understand the meanings that others convey. The point of learning language and interacting socially, then, is not to master rules, but to make connections with other people and to make sense of experiences (Wells, 1986). In summary, language occurs through an interaction among genes (which hold innate tendencies to communicate and be sociable), environment, and the child's own thinking abilities.

When children develop abilities is always a difficult question to answer. In general, children say their first words between 12 and 18 months of age. They begin to use complex sentences by the age of 4 to 4 1/2 years. By the time they start kindergarten, children know most of the fundamentals of their language, so that they are able to converse easily with someone who speaks as they do (that is, in their dialect). As with other aspects of development, language acquisition is not predictable. One child may say her first word at 10 months, another at 20 months. One child may use complex sentences at 5 1/2 years, another at 3 years.

Oral Language Components

Oral language, the complex system that relates sounds to meanings, is made up of three components: the phonological, semantic, and syntactic (Lindfors, 1987). The phonological component involves the rules for combining sounds. Speakers of English, for example, know that an English word can end, but not begin, with an *-ng* sound. We are not aware of our knowledge of these rules, but our ability to understand and pronounce English words demonstrates that we do know a vast number of rules.

The semantic component is made up of morphemes, the smallest units of meaning that may be combined with each other to make up words (for example, *paper + s* are the two morphemes that make up *papers*), and sentences (Brown, 1973). A dictionary contains the semantic component of a language, and reflects not just what words make up that language, but also what words (and meanings) are important to the speakers of the language.

The syntactic component consists of the rules that enable us to combine morphemes into sentences. As soon as a child uses two morphemes together, as in "more cracker," she is using a syntactic rule about how morphemes are combined to convey meaning. Like the rules making up the other components, syntactic rules become increasingly complex as the child develops. From combining two morphemes, the child goes on to combine words with suffixes or inflections (*-s* or *-ing*, as in *papers* and *eating*) and eventually creates questions, statements, commands, etc. She also learns to combine two ideas into one complex sentence, as in "I'll share my crackers if you share your juice."

Of course speakers of a language constantly use these three components of language together, usually in social situations. Some language experts would add a fourth component: pragmatics, which deals with rules of language use. Pragmatic rules are part of our communicative competence, our ability to speak appropriately in different situations, for example, in a conversational way at home and in a more formal way at a job interview. Young children need to learn the ways of speaking in the day care center or school where, for example, teachers often ask rhetorical questions. Learning pragmatic rules is as important as learning the rules of the other components of language since people are perceived and judged based on both what they say and how and when they say it.

Nurturing Language Development

Parents and caregivers need to remember that language in the great majority of individuals develops very efficiently. Adults should try not to focus on "problems," such as the inability to pronounce words as adults do (for example, when children pronounce r's like w's). Most children naturally outgrow such things, which are a tiny segment of the child's total repertoire of language. However, if a child appears not to hear what others say to her; if family members and those closest to her find her difficult to understand; or if she is noticeably different in her communicative abilities from those in her age range, adults may want to seek advice from specialists in children's speech, language and hearing.

Teachers can help sustain natural language development by providing environments full of language development opportunities. Here are some general guidelines for teachers, parents, and other caregivers:

- Understand that every child's language or dialect is worthy of respect as a valid system for communication. It reflects the identities, values, and experiences of the child's family and community.
- Treat children as if they are conversationalists, even if they are not yet talking. Children learn very early about how conversations work (taking turns, looking attentively, using facial expressions, etc.) as long as they have experiences with conversing adults.
- Encourage interaction among children. Peer learning is an important part of language development, especially in mixed-age groups. Activities involving a wide range of materials should promote talk. There should be a balance between individual activities and those that nurture collaboration and discussion, such as dramatic play, block-building, book-sharing, or carpentry.
- Remember that parents, caregivers, teachers, and guardians are the chief resources in language development. Children learn much from each other, but adults are the main conversationalists, questioners, listeners, responders, and sustainers of language development and growth in the child-care center or classroom.
- Continue to encourage interaction as children come to understand written language. Children in the primary grades can keep developing oral abilities and skills by consulting with each other, raising questions, and providing information in varied situations. Every area of the curriculum is enhanced through language, so that classrooms full of active learners are hardly ever silent.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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